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ABSTRACT

This sampler discusses California's English-language arts assessment program and presents examples of elementary school reading assessments, writing assessments, and writing prompts. The first section of the sampler takes an integrated look at Year One of the California Learning Assessment System. The second section presents the scoring guide for reading, 10 student responses to a sample elementary reading prompt, and commentary on each student response using the criteria in the scoring guide. The third section of the sampler offers scoring guides and six sample student papers for each of the two types of writing assessed in Spring 1993: expressive writing and persuasive writing. The fourth section presents a writing prompt: an excerpt from a story with directions for students to write about their reading; guidelines for students on working in small groups to discuss the story; and a writing assignment based on the short story. (RS)

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CLAS

California Learning
Assessment System

A Sampler of

English-Language Arts Assessment

Elementary

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Preliminary Edition
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A Sampler of

English-Language Arts Assessment

Elementary

A Sampler of English-Language Arts Assessments – Elementary was developed by the California Learning Assessment System's English-Language Arts Development Team (see the acknowledgments for the membership of the team and others who made significant contributions to the document).

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Acknowledgments

CLAS English-Language Arts Development Team

Joanne Arellanes, Cambridge Heights Elementary School, San Juan Unified School District
Joyce Ashby, Turlock Junior High School, Turlock Joint Elementary School District
Sonja Bedford, Santa Rosa High School, City of Santa Rosa High School District
Joan Brown, Alameda High School, Alameda City Unified School District
Rosemary Cabe, Lompoc Valley Middle School, Lompoc Unified School District
Lynda Chittenden, Park Elementary School, Mill Valley Elementary School District
Linda Chrabas, La Loma Junior High School, Modesto City Elementary School District
Lois Clark, Mission Middle School, Jurupa Unified School District
Sandra Crepps, Anderson Elementary, Dixon Unified School District
Diego Davalos, Chula Vista Senior High, Sweetwater Union High School District
Yvonne Divans-Hutchinson, Markham Intermediate School, Los Angeles Unified School District
Harriet Donaldson, Conley Elementary School, Taft City Elementary School District
Martha Dudley, Roosevelt Junior High School, Selma Unified School District
Johnetta Fleming, Franklin Middle School, Long Beach Unified School District
Rowena Hacker, Trabuco Hills High School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District
Sylvia Jones, Redwood High School, Tamalpais Union High School District
Mercedes McMurray, Seaside Elementary School, Torrance Unified School District
Cecil Morris, Roseville High School, Roseville Joint Union High School District
Becky Orona, Washington Elementary School, Montebello Unified School District
Cecelia Osborn, Long Beach Unified School District
Teresa Pitta, John Muir Elementary School, Merced City Elementary School District
Nancy Preston, Casimir Middle School, Torrance Unified School District
Elizabeth Sawyer, Belmont Senior High, Los Angeles Unified School District
Kelly Smith, El Sausal Middle School, Salinas Union High School District
Edie Sonnenburg, Buena Vista High School, Corona-Norco Unified District
Marolyn Stewart, Chaparral Middle School, Moorpark Unified School District
Bob Thornburg, Bishop Union Elementary School District
Phyllis Turner, James Monroe Elementary School, Santa Rosa Elementary School District
Peggy Watterson, Emerson Junior High School, Davis Joint Unified School District
Darby Williams, James McKee Elementary School, Elk Grove Unified School District

Consultants/Advisors

Sheridan Blau, California Writing Project, University of California, Santa Barbara
Fran Claggett, Forestville
Mel Grubb, California Literature Project, Los Angeles County Office of Education

Sacramento County Office of Education

Sherry Arnold, Senior Staff Analyst
Linda Murai, Director, Center for Student Assessment and Program Accountability
Julia Stanfill, Stanfill Associates

Department of Education Staff

Juanita Jorgenson, Analyst
Barbara Weiss, Consultant
Jill Wilson, Consultant

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CAP/CLAS English-Language Arts Reserve Team

Bill Arnerich, Lompoc Senior High School, Lompoc Unified School District
Karen Barr, Alpine Union School District
Diane Berger, California State University, Dominguez Hills
Jan Brink, Northern Humboldt Union High School District
Carol Brown, Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District
Sherryl Broyles, Los Angeles Unified School District
Mary Carden, Santa Ana Unified School District
Loyal Carlon, San Diego City Unified School District
Mildred Cunningham, Los Angeles Unified School District
Juanita Darsa, Inglewood Unified School District
Kent Gill, Camp Sherman, Oregon
Gilbert Gonzales, San Diego City Unified School District
Stephanie Graham, Los Angeles County Office of Education
Sam Hatch, Lodi Unified School District
Jack Hobbs, Ventura Unified School District
DeWitt Johnson, Ygnacio Valley High School, Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Alice Kawazoe, Oakland Unified School District
Kimi Kinoshita, Shasta Meadows Elementary School, Enterprise Elementary School District
June Kizu, Los Angeles Unified School District
Joe Lawrence, San Juan Unified School District
Patsy Lockhart, New Haven Unified School District
Helen Lodge, California State University, Northridge (Retired)
Judith Machado, Tulare Unified School District (Deceased)
Luis Martinez, Montebello Unified School District
Don Mayfield, San Diego County Office of Education
Joan McCarten, San Jose Unified School District
Barbara McCullough, Sylvan Union Elementary School District
Barbara Miller-Souviney, Cajon Valley Union Elementary School District
Marie Neer, Modoc Unified School District
Katherine Paull, Los Angeles Unified School District
Claire Pelton, San Jose Unified School District
Carol Penara, Richmond Unified School District
Mary-Anna Rae, Torrance Unified School District
Marilyn Renger, Ventura Unified School District
Sandy Rogers, Long Beach Unified School District
Bill Saunders, University of California at Los Angeles
Gail Siegel, Ross Elementary School District
Julie Simpson, Fullerton Union High School District
Tei Ann Sugahara, Chualar Union Elementary School District
Carol Tateishi, Bay Area Writing Project
Sue Thomas, Elk Grove Unified School District
Carol Toomer, Hueneme Elementary School District
Terry Underwood, Rutter Middle School, Elk Grove Unified School District
Fred Vogt, Kern High School District
George Wallach, Fremont Unified School District
Marilyn Whitty, Mira Costa High School, South Bay Union High School District
Linda Wiezorek, Los Berros Elementary School, Lompoc Unified School District
Don Windsor, Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District
Josephine Zarro, Los Angeles Unified School District

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Contents

Acknowledgments iii

I. California Learning Assessment System, English-Language Arts, Year One: 1993 ..... I-1
English-Language Arts Framework as the Foundation I-1
Aligning the CLAS Assessment with the English-Language Arts Framework I-2
CLAS Two-Part System – On-demand and Portfolio I-2
Definition of Reading and the Reading Assessment I-3
The On-demand Reading Assessment I-4
Collaborative Group Work in the On-demand Assessment I-5
The Writing Assessment I-5

II. The 1993 Reading Assessment, Focus on Literature II-1
Scoring Guide for the California Reading Assessment II-3
Reading Performances II-5
Student Responses to the Reading Assessment II-11
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6-Paper 1 ..... II-13
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6-Paper 2 ..... II-23
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5-Paper 1 ..... II-33
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5-Paper 2 ..... II-43
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4-Paper 1 ..... II-53
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4-Paper 2 ..... II-63
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3-Paper 1 ..... II-73
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3-Paper 2 ..... II-83
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 ..... II-93
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 ..... II-103

III Elementary Writing Assessment III-1
Expressive Writing III-2
Rhetorical Effectiveness Scoring Guide for Expressive Writing III-3
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 ..... III-7
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 ..... III-11
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 ..... III-13
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 ..... III-15
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 ..... III-17
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 ..... III-18
Persuasive Writing III-19
Rhetorical Effectiveness Scoring Guide for Persuasive Writing III-21
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 ..... III-29

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 ..... III-32
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 ..... III-36
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 ..... III-39
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 ..... III-41
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 ..... III-42

IV. Sample Elementary Prompt IV-1

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I. California Learning Assessment System
English-Language Arts
Year One: 1993

English-Language Arts Framework as the Foundation

In 1986 and again in 1993, the State Board of Education adopted the *English-Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*. This document identifies the overarching goals of the English-language arts curriculum:

- *To prepare all students to function as informed and effective citizens in our democratic society.* Language permits people to gain access to the knowledge that makes us culturally literate, and one of the most important ingredients in becoming culturally literate is familiarity with significant works of literature in which the great themes, events, and ideals of the culture have been recorded.

- *To prepare all students to function effectively in the world of work.* In this age of technology, full participation in the work force requires effective language use. Effective language use is at the very core of lifelong learning strategies that will permit people to become versatile and to adapt to jobs in the twenty-first century, which will require sophisticated technical, scientific, and managerial skills.

- *To prepare all students to realize personal fulfillment.* Effective language use also permits people to develop a full sense of themselves as individuals. Through the reading of Anne Frank's diary or the musings of a contemporary author, individuals find answers to their questions and experience a connection with the past and present. By being exposed to the greatest and most powerful literary works, people are given effective models for speaking and writing that enable them to express themselves as individuals within a culture.

English Language Arts Framework, pages 1-2

Authors of the framework and subsequent model curriculum guides and standards envisioned for California a literature-based English-language arts program that actively engaged students in reading, writing, and reflecting on a wide range of significant literary works and human experiences. At the heart of the framework has been a paradigm shift that replaced "gaining knowledge" with "constructing meaning" as the primary goal to be achieved. Educators at all grade levels have long recognized that students use language actively, interactively, strategically, and fluently as they construct and communicate meaning. Students can grow in their ability to use language as they explore the universe of discourse through their reading, writing, and thinking.

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The *English-Language Arts Framework*, along with the state model curriculum standards and guides, describe English-language arts programs that encourage students to read widely and in depth, write often in many formats study important writings from many disciplines, and relate these studies to their own lives in meaningful ways. Today in California English-language arts classes, students are expected to be active participants in their learning as they try to make sense of the concepts, issues, or attitudes related to a piece of literature. Further, students are urged to think critically as they satisfy interests, clarify issues, solve problems, generate new ideas, or make decisions in response to their readings.

Aligning the CLAS Assessment with the *English-Language Arts Framework*

Where once a single correct answer to a generic question was thought to be sufficient in determining comprehension, today such a measure is considered too constricting, not very informative, and an insufficient indication of the student's construction of meaning. The framework speaks specifically to the need for assessment to accurately mirror the integrated parts of the language arts that contribute to the wholeness of understanding.

> With the revised curriculum in place, assessment of its effectiveness must depend on tests that reflect the purposes of the curriculum. Teachers and others responsible for assessment will create tests based on significant works whose meanings have import for all students; tests will integrate all of the language arts by including significant reading and writing and reflecting the students oral skills as well; and tests will focus on students' meaning, not on formalistic features such as plot and character.
>
> *English-Language Arts Framework*, page 33

Few, if any, large scale testing programs have attempted to assess students' ability to construct meaning. Standardized tests have focused exclusively on decoding, word recognition, and comprehension, and "although objective tests are clearly easier to administer, less expensive, and more quickly scored, they can measure only a small portion of what children have learned and understood" (page 35). Since the construction of meaning is the primary purpose of both reading and writing, the CLAS assessment allows students to show what they know through their own unique responses to questions rather than to simply identify correct meanings that test-makers have posited.

CLAS Two-Part System—On-demand and Portfolio

> Effective English-language arts programs include a wide range of assessment techniques to evaluate student's growth in understanding challenging literature, confronting important social issues and values in literature and their own lives, writing clear and lively prose, speaking thoughtfully and effectively, and listening critically, all of which enable students to participate fully in society.
>
> *English-Language Arts Framework*, page 36

Like standardized tests that are given to students one day during the school year, the on-demand portion of the California Learning Assessment System can only provide a snapshot of an individual student's level of performance in reading and writing. While every effort has been made to construct an assessment that gives students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their ability to construct meaning, it is important to emphasize that each score represents the achievement of a particular student on a specific day, responding to a given task for assessment purposes. No student should be labeled as a "three reader" or a "three writer."

The "on-demand" portion of the English-language arts assessment has three major purposes:

1. To establish standards of excellence for students in reading diverse kinds of materials for different purposes and writing to a variety of important types of writing
2. To measure how well students are able to construct meaning through integrated and dynamic interactions among reader, writer, text, and context
3. To improve the instructional program by providing an assessment that reflects the framework and is based on the expertise of some of California's best teachers.

In order to truly determine the level at which students are performing, a portfolio of work must be collected and evaluated. A portfolio enables students to:

1. Read, respond to, and compare longer works of literature.
2. Do sustained projects in which reading, writing, speaking, and listening are used in an integrated way.
3. Demonstrate understanding in a variety of modes of expression.
4. Use sources from outside the classroom in extended projects.
5. Produce polished writing samples, using the full writing process.
6. Identify ways of improving their own work.
7. Exhibit originality; go beyond what is taught or expected; develop an area of personal expertise.

Currently CLAS is exploring the use of portfolios as another method of assessment.

Definition of Reading and the Reading Assessment

In our rapidly changing world, students need to understand that there are many purposes for reading, and they need to demonstrate their ability to read for different purposes. Some students may be able to read elaborate directions for playing a video game but be unable to make any sense of a chapter in their history book. They may be able to read the lyrics of a song but be unable to read a poem that has no accompanying sound. They may be able to read a novel but not a voter information booklet. Like the writing assessment that measures how well students write for different purposes, the CLAS reading assessment includes a range of reading purposes that students will encounter throughout their lives. Although we cannot assess reading in the abstract

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any more than we can assess thinking, we can assess the quality of reading by looking at written and graphic evidence of how the student interacts with the text.

Reading, as defined for the purposes of California's English-language arts assessment, is the process of constructing meaning through transactions with text. In this view of reading, the individual reader assumes responsibility for producing an interpretation of a text guided not only by the language of the text but also by the associations, cultural experiences, and knowledge that the reader brings to the interpretive task. Rather than believing that meaning resides solely within the words on the page, this view of reading emphasizes the role of the individual reader in making meaning through a process that brings together textual and contextual evidence and the distinctive experience and perspective of the reader as meaning-maker.

What exactly does this mean? Because no two individuals have had the same life experiences, each person has a unique way of interpreting information and "constructing meaning." When a person reads a particular text, he may decode and comprehend the words on the page, but the meaning that emerges from the process of reading is based on the individual's life experiences—including personal experience, associations to events in the person's life, cultural background and heritage, and knowledge about the topic. Though individual words in a text have dictionary "meanings," the person reading a text gives the text life and constructs the fuller meaning, drawing on the connections between individual words and his own life experiences.

The framework calls for students to be actively engaged in making sense of important concepts, attitudes, issues, and values related to a text. They should think critically as they explore interests, solve problems, resolve conflicts, clarify values, generate new ideas, synthesize or apply information, set goals, and make decisions in response to the literature they read.

The On-demand Reading Assessment

The *English Language Arts Framework* calls for . . .

> An assessment program encompassing the full range of goals of the English-language arts program, aligned with what students are expected to learn in the English-language arts program, and providing alternative strategies and forms of testing (page 4).

The CLAS on-demand assessment cannot possibly encompass the full range of goals called for in the framework because the framework is so comprehensive. However, this portion of the assessment has been designed to be that "snapshot" into what students are expected to learn, using alternative strategies and forms of testing.

Texts selected for the on-demand reading assessment are fiction (stories, novel excerpts), nonfiction (articles, essays, biography, autobiography, book excerpts), and

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poetry, typically appropriate for each grade level tested. Texts may, on occasion, be an excerpt of a long piece; they will always, however, be complete in themselves. Two related texts—a story and poem or an article and story—may be paired. While it is not possible to match specific texts to individual pupils, the assessment does draw on a diverse range of materials deemed suitable for classroom instruction in English-language arts classes. Since students will construct a meaning for a text based on transactions among text, context, and experience, selections for the assessment focus on concepts familiar to students. In all cases, teachers on the development team consider the appropriateness of subject matter and complexity of text for students at each of the tested grade levels.

Collaborative Group Work in the On-demand Assessment

Although the testing of speaking or listening was not stipulated in SB 662, teachers on the development team wanted to assure that this assessment reflects both instructional strategies used in the best classrooms in California and those in the framework. The activities included in the on-demand assessment serve two purposes. First, they allow students to discuss the reading passage, sharing with classmates the elements that they feel were important or exploring a particular aspect of the piece in depth. Second, they engage the students in activities that prepare them for the writing assessment.

The Writing Assessment

Since 1987, the direct assessment of writing has been in place in California. The California Assessment Program (CAP) writing assessment had four major purposes and those continue to be evident in the CLAS assessment.

The four purposes are:

- to monitor achievement in writing in California schools
- to assess the implementation of the *English-Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide (K-8)* and *English-Language Arts Framework*
- to encourage more writing and different types of writing in California classrooms
- to provide information and materials that will help teachers strengthen their writing programs

Criteria for selecting the types of writing to be assessed at elementary, middle, and high school levels included:

- the kinds of writing incorporated in California's best school writing programs
- relationship to students' reading experiences
- consistency with students' cognitive development
- appropriate curriculum sequencing
- appropriateness for assessment purposes

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Four types of writing have been identified for the grade four assessment, and eight types of writing have been identified for the grades eight and ten assessments; however, only some of the types were included at each grade level in the 1993 assessment. Over the next few years, the other types will be added to the on-demand portion or assessed through portfolio.

The types of writing included in 1993 are listed below.

Types of Writing	GR 4	GR 8	GR 10
Expressive	X		
Autobiographical Incident		X	X
Firsthand Biography		X	
Reflective Essay			X
Persuasive	X		
Problem Solution		X	
Speculation About Causes or Effects		X	X
Interpretation			X

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II. The 1993 Reading Assessment

Focus on Literature

A principal goal of the *English-Language Arts Framework* is to revitalize English-language arts instruction through a literature-based curriculum. The 1993 CLAS English-language arts assessment in reading, therefore, focused specifically on student performance in the reading of literature. Through the study of literature, students learn to observe and interpret details, appreciate the precise and artful use of language, and evaluate characters and their actions. They also examine concepts that have universal meanings; struggle with social issues reflected in literature; make judgments about a work and its assertions, arguments, or information; and observe how the world is viewed across various times and cultures.

An effective language arts curriculum encourages students to be intellectually engaged as they read. In such a program students participate actively and with confidence as independent readers and evaluators of literary works. They are encouraged to recognize multiple possibilities for constructing meaning from a text while carefully testing all interpretations against the available textual or contextual evidence. They learn to make connections with, reflect on, analyze, appreciate, and challenge literary works, presenting reasons and developing arguments in support of their judgments. While students are encouraged to enjoy reading, they also learn to observe how texts are constructed and to recognize how texts work to promote positions and ideas that they may prefer to resist.

The CLAS reading assessment supports a literature-based curriculum aligned with the framework. Each form of the assessment has been designed to stimulate thoughtful and critical responses from students. Given the multiple possibilities for reacting to, interpreting, and criticizing any literary work, student performances are not scored on the basis of predetermined "correct answers." The teacher-evaluators who score the reading assessments do not evaluate a student's feelings or attitudes, but rather the quality of the evidence that the student presents in support of any response or interpretation.

All literary texts used in the CLAS assessment of reading have been selected by a committee of elementary, middle grades, and high school teachers representing California's diverse population. Panels of curriculum specialists and representatives of the community at large also review the texts prior to their use in the assessment.

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Scoring Guide for the California Reading Assessment

Reading, as defined for the purposes of California's English-language arts assessment, is the process of constructing meaning through transactions with text. In this view of reading, the individual reader assumes responsibility for producing an interpretation of a text guided not only by the language of the text but also by the associations, cultural experiences, and knowledge that the reader brings to the interpretive task. Rather than believing that meaning resides solely within the words on the page, this view of reading emphasizes the role of the individual reader in making meaning through a process that brings together textual and contextual evidence and the distinctive experience and perspective of the reader as meaning-maker.

To assess a student's performance in reading is therefore not only to assess the richness and plausibility of the meaning that the student produces but also the quality of the process through which meaning is produced. In some cases, students may be better readers than the evidence seems to show. Raters must give credit for all evidence of the construction of meaning but, at the same time, be careful not to base a score on rater-inferred meanings. Raters will always be alert to graphic or written clues that show indications of reading performance. Raters should also note that neither length of responses nor negative statements about the assessment provide information about the quality of the reading performance.

A score should not be lowered by a chance or occasional misreading of a word, phrase, or fact in a test performance that would otherwise demonstrate a higher level of reading performance. Similarly, the rater must credit an interpretation that is supported by plausible reasons and/or references to the text, even though the interpretation may differ from the rater's own expectations.

When two passages are paired, one more complex than the other, the best readers interpret both passages and explore implications of the pairing. Less able or emerging readers may be less successful at handling the complexities of the more difficult passage and usually focus on the more accessible one. Looking carefully at the responses to both passages gives raters multiple opportunities to rate the overall performance. For the purposes of this assessment, when two selections are used, they both serve as the basis for the reading assessment.

While every effort has been made to construct a reading assessment approach that gives students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their ability to construct meaning from interacting with given texts, it is important to emphasize that each individual reading score represents the reading achievement of a particular student on a specific day, reading given text(s) for assessment purposes. No student should be labeled as a "three reader" or a "five reader" on the basis of any single assessment.

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Complex factors that affect student responses include the following:

- The purpose of the reading, as established by the prompt and perhaps modified by the student's own needs as established by his or her relationship to the text
- The nature of the questions and activities in the prompt
- Previous experience with the text type or with the subject of the text

Condition Codes

Raters will score every paper that has any evidence of the construction of meaning. However, there may be instances when a student response is scored using condition codes.

Code	Definition
A	Unscorable/Uninterpretable Evidence • Illegible handwriting • Underlining and highlighting only • Copied section(s) of text or prompt verbatim with no other response • Irrelevant doodling (This option is to be exercised only when there is no perceptible relevance to the text(s) in the prompt. If the text is a story that includes a dog sled race and the student draws a picture of a track event, for example, assuming that there is no other evidence available on the assessment, the paper would receive a score point one. The picture shows a personal connection at least to the word *race* in the text.)
B	Off Topic
C	Blank / No Response
D	Language Other Than English • Entire paper in language other than English (No score; condition code only) • Responds in more than one language (Score English portion and enter score; use condition code to flag that a portion of the response is in another language.)

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Reading Performances

The following list of reading performances shows the range of behaviors that readers may engage in as they construct meaning from a text. Readers are not expected to exhibit all these behaviors, but more effective readers are likely to exhibit a wider range of behaviors. In general, readers also demonstrate more advanced levels of achievement by the degree to which they attend to increasingly more complex structures of meaning.

As readers demonstrate the quality, range, and comprehensiveness of their transactions with texts through their writing and graphic representations, they:

1. Demonstrate intellectual engagement with the text: experiment with ideas; think divergently; take risks; express opinions; speculate, hypothesize, visualize characters or scenes, explore alternative scenarios; raise questions; make predictions; think metaphorically.
2. Explore multiple possibilities of meaning; consider cultural and/or psychological nuances and complexities in the text.
3. Fill in gaps; use clues and evidence in the passage to draw conclusions; make warranted and plausible interpretations of ideas, facts, concepts, and/or arguments.
4. Recognize and deal with ambiguities in the text.
5. Revise, reshape, and/or deepen early interpretations.
6. Evaluate; examine the degree of fit between the author's ideas or information and the reader's prior knowledge or experience.
7. Challenge and reflect critically on the text by agreeing or disagreeing, arguing, endorsing, questioning, and/or wondering.
8. Demonstrate understanding of the work as a whole.
9. Attend to the structure of the text: show how the parts work together; how characters and/or other elements of the work are related and change.
10. Show aesthetic appreciation of the text; consider linguistic and structural complexities.
11. Allude to and/or retell specific passage(s) to validate and/or expand ideas.
12. Make meaning of parts of the text.
13. Make connections between the text and their own ideas, experiences, and knowledge.
14. Demonstrate emotional engagement with the text.
15. Retell, summarize, and/or paraphrase with purpose.
16. Reflect on the meaning(s) of the text, including larger or more universal significances; express a new understanding or insight.

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Score Point 6 – Exemplary Reading Performance

An exemplary reading performance is insightful, discerning, and perceptive as the reader constructs and reflects on meaning in a text. Readers at this level are sensitive to linguistic, structural, cultural, and psychological nuances and complexities. They fill in gaps in a text, making warranted and responsible assumptions about unstated causes or motivations, or drawing meaning from subtle cues. They differentiate between literal and figurative meanings. They recognize real or seeming contradictions, exploring possibilities for their resolution or tolerating ambiguities. They demonstrate their understanding of the whole work as well as an awareness of how the parts work together to create the whole.

Readers achieving score point six develop connections with and among texts. They connect their understanding of the text not only to their own ideas, experience, and knowledge, but to their history as participants in a culture or larger community, often making connections to other texts or other works of art. Exceptional readers draw on evidence from the text to generate, validate, expand, and reflect on their own ideas.

These readers take risks. They entertain challenging ideas and explore multiple possibilities of meaning as they read, grounding these meanings in their acute perceptions of textual and cultural complexities. They often revise their understanding of a text as they re-read and as additional information or insight becomes available to them. They sometimes articulate a newly developed level of understanding.

Readers performing at level six challenge the text. They carry on a dialogue with the writer, raising questions, taking exception, agreeing or disagreeing, appreciating or criticizing text features. They may sometimes suggest ways of rewriting the text. They may test the validity of the author's ideas or information, by considering the authority of the author and the nature and quality of evidence presented. They may speculate about the ideology or cultural or historical biases that seem to inform a text, sometimes recognizing and embracing and sometimes resisting the position that a text seems to construct for its reader.

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Score Point 5 – Discerning Reading Performance

A reading performance at score point five is discerning, thorough, and perceptive, but will probably show somewhat less insight or sensitivity to textual nuances and complexities than an exemplary reading. These readers are able to fill in gaps in a text, making plausible assumptions from subtle cues; but they engage in these operations with less acuteness of vision than more expert readers. They recognize and differentiate between literal and figurative meanings. They recognize real or seeming contradictions, exploring possibilities for their resolution or tolerating ambiguities. They demonstrate their understanding of the whole work as well as an awareness of how the parts work together to create the whole.

Readers achieving score point five see connections between their own lives and the world of the text. They connect their understanding of the text not only to their own ideas, experience, and knowledge, but to their history as participants in a culture or community. They often make connections to other texts or other works of art; these connections, while always purposeful and connected to the text, may be more predictable than those made by exceptional readers. They also draw on evidence from the text to generate, validate, expand, and reflect on their own ideas.

These readers may explore multiple possibilities of meaning. While they may form firm interpretations early in their reading, they are open to revising their ideas as additional information or insight becomes available to them. They sometimes articulate newly developed levels of understanding.

Readers performing at this level challenge the text. They pose questions, postulate answers, take exception, agree, disagree, speculate; however, the questions and/or issues they raise may not be as insightful or perceptive as those of the reader demonstrating an exemplary reading.

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Score Point 4 – Thoughtful Reading Performance

Readers at score point four construct a thoughtful and plausible interpretation of a text. They fill in some gaps in a text, making assumptions about unstated causes or motivations or drawing meaning from cues in the text. They usually differentiate between literal and figurative meanings. They may recognize real or seeming contradictions, but are sometimes distracted by these contradictions and by ambiguities. They demonstrate a thoughtful understanding of the whole work.

Readers achieving score point four develop connections with and among texts. They usually connect their understanding of the text to their own experience and knowledge and sometimes to other texts. When directed, these readers may generate, validate, expand, and/or reflect on their ideas about the text, but with less depth than in a score point five or six response. These readers tend to paraphrase or retell, often thoroughly and purposefully. They also see, however, a more general significance in or wider application of the literal facts of the text.

These readers, while confident, rarely take risks. They accept the text without exploring multiple possibilities of meaning. They tend to present their understanding of a text as fixed and rarely revise their interpretation as they re-read and as additional information becomes available.

Readers demonstrating this level of reading performance sometimes challenge or question the text. They may raise questions and may agree or disagree without explaining their reactions.

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Score Point 3 – Literal Reading Performance

Students performing at score point three are literal readers, constructing a plausible but superficial interpretation of the whole work. They show little sensitivity to nuances and complexities; they may not respond to some portion of the text. They usually demonstrate a sense of the whole work, but at a simplistic and literal level.

These readers develop few or no connections with or among texts. Sometimes they connect the text associationally with personal experience, but the connection is generally superficial and unexamined.

Score point three readers are not risk takers. They show little tolerance for textual difficulties or lack of closure. Confronted by textual complexity, they may not address the difficulties. Their reading process tends not to be recursive: having made some initial sense of the text, they are inclined to retain their view without testing or revising it.

Readers at the score point three level of reading performance rarely challenge the text or carry on an internal dialogue with the writer. If they raise questions at all, the questions will be largely unproductive expressions of frustration or low level inquiries (e.g., about word meanings). Any expressed appreciations or criticisms are likely to be simplistic and based on a literal understanding of the text.

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Score Point 2 – Limited Reading Performance

A limited reading performance indicates that readers at score point two construct partial and/or reductive meanings for a text. They may demonstrate a superficial understanding of parts of the text. They demonstrate a reductive meaning for the text by overgeneralizing or oversimplifying but seem unable to grasp the whole.

Readers within this range of performance develop few or no connections with texts. They may, as they recognize some idea, continue to write or draw, but their responses will appear to have only a tangential relevance to the text.

These readers seldom ask questions of a text or offer meaningful evaluations of what they read. They tend to abandon or become entangled in difficult sections of a text.

Score Point 1 – Minimal Reading Performance

In a minimal reading performance, the reader appears to understand and respond to an individual word, title, and/or phrase but not in ways that demonstrate even a rudimentary understanding of how these words relate to text ideas.

Any connections such readers may make to their own experience will appear in the form of words or drawings that have textual associations only to an isolated word or phrase. Minimal responses may include vague and unsupported evaluations or responses (e.g., "I like/don't like this story," or "It's boring.")

Level-one reader responses suggest that these students do not engage in reading as a process of making coherent meaning.

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Student Responses to the Reading Assessment

The CLAS English-Language Arts Assessment is divided into three sections: Reading, Group Work, and Writing. The score for reading is based on all of the responses to Section One of the assessment.

Scoring a reading task requires a careful look at all evidence presented by the student. Since there are many opportunities within each task for the student to demonstrate an understanding and an interpretation of a text, the evidence indicating a particular score point is rarely found in the response to any single question on this assessment. A rich response to one question may be followed by a perfunctory response to the next; a drawing may provide the student with ideas for elaboration in a subsequent response. The teacher-evaluator considers all of the reading performances (see page II-5) exhibited by the student throughout the task, comparing the quality of the evidence against the criteria defined in the scoring guide. The teacher-evaluator rewards all evidence of a performance, whether in the form of margin notes, graphics, or written responses, and makes a final holistic judgment about the entire performance.

It is important to remember that each sample paper presented here represents the level of performance of that student on a specific day, reading a text for an assessment rather than personal reasons. The student's performance will be affected by many factors, including previous reading experiences and familiarity with the subject matter of the text. No student should be labeled a "two reader" or a "four reader." In order to assess any student's overall reading ability, a student's teacher must look at the entire spectrum of the student's reading performances. This assessment provides an opportunity to add one important piece of information to that overall evaluation.

"An Amazing Discovery," the grade four reading task, asks students to read a true account of the chance discovery of the Lascaux caves by four French boys. The story is retold as a suspenseful narrative that recounts the boys' exploration of the cave and their growing awareness of the cave's significance. The questions in the prompt provide many different opportunities for students to show the quality of their reading of this text.

The best readers show evidence, frequently in their margin notes, of making an acquaintance with, for instance, the characters, the plot, the setting, etc. They use their background knowledge to decipher how parts of the story interrelate and make sense, and they become engaged with the entire text. These readers use the text, their background knowledge, and their experiences to develop meaning. They use what they have read to reflect not only on the text but also on their own lives, on the lives of others, or on the human situation.

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Most exemplary readers acknowledge the author; they go beyond the information given, asking questions of the author or of themselves, and exploring possible extensions of meaning. They step back from the text, evaluate it, and relate the text to other works they have read, to movies or televisions shows they have seen, or to their own experiences or their awareness of another person's similar experiences.

The less proficient reader is more easily distracted by difficult words or unfamiliar concepts and is likely to have a superficial and fragmentary understanding of the text. These readers usually decide what the text means early in their reading and remain with this initial idea.

Included in the sample student responses that follow are:

- two papers representing score point 6
- two papers representing score point 5
- two papers representing score point 4
- two papers representing score point 3
- one paper representing score point 2
- one paper representing score point 1

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

Finding a hole in the ground that's full of nothing might be exciting or sometimes it's dangerous. Wild animals might have lived in it. What do you mean when you said "hollow bubble" It was a bubble Of dark nothingness? And where and what is Lascaux Manor.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

It must of been neat to find that hole especialy if no one else had found it befor. I agree with Simon. They might of gotten stuck halfway and could not get back to the top in the dark Throwing rocks to see how deep it was is smart. The hole might be very deep.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

Im suprised the boy did not show a trace of fear. It would be scary to be so far underground. Even the light didn't burn out the paintings - might of been very old but maybe not cavemen paintings. Telling someone about it might take away the glory of finding an underground chamber.

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*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood. *"An Amazing Discovery," Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I'm glad the schoolmaster believed him because sometimes people think kids are joking. I did not know this was a true story. What do historians do? Where is this cave?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

This was a good story especialy for someone who likes adventure like me. I thought the cave might have gems in it, or an underground passage to a secret mansion. A cave underground really added suspense to the the story Those painting must of been worth a fortune. If thare paintings are prehistoric, What did they use for colors? This story really made you guess what was going to happen next.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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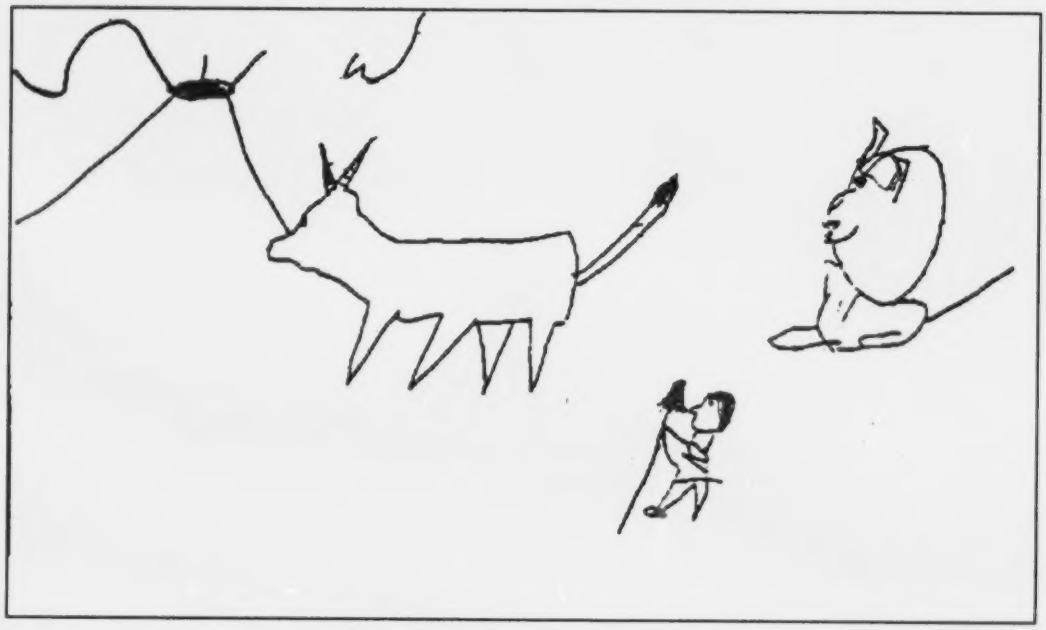
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

These are pictures of prehistoric animals and people the men hunt for lions and the lions hunt for deer. It shows how people and animals survive

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. How long ago did this take place?

b. Did you learn anything from this?

c. What did you expect to find in the cave?

d. How old were you when you made this discovery.

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

I learned courage from them because they were never afraid I learned patience because they had to wait for four days

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

I think it wold be better with this picture becaus I tells what the boys were thinking. They imagined it might of been cavemen who drew these pictures.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 1 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

I was at an obsacle course at a camp. There was a tunnel which led to a small cave. Inside it was verey dark. There was another tunnel which led to the otherside. I also went to a cavern It was 1.8 miles long. At the end you could not reach it because there were stalagtites in the way.

STOP!
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE!
This is the end of Section One.

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Commentary for Score Point 6 Response - Paper 1

The evidence provided in this paper indicates an exemplary reading performance. A number of examples show how this young reader moves directly into the story. In the margin notes, for example, the reader speaks directly to the author when he writes, "What do you mean When you said 'It was a hallow bubble of dark nothingness!'" He agrees with the character Simon, speculating that "They might of gotten stuck halfway and could not get back to the top in the dark."

Connecting the text to his own understanding of human nature, the reader writes, "Telling someone about it might take away the glory of finding an underground chamber .... I'm glad the schoolmaster believed him because sometimes people think kids are joking." He wonders about parts of the story as he speculates: "... the paintings might of been very old but maybe not cavemen paintings."

The reader steps back from the text and evaluates the effectiveness of the narrative: "This was a good story especially for someone who likes adventure .... A cave underground really added suspense to the story .... This story made you guess what was going to happen next." The reader continues to probe by asking such questions as "If these paintings are prehistoric, what did they use for colors?"

This reader demonstrates what exemplary readers do by filling in gaps in the story, drawing on personal background knowledge and on previous experience with stories. He acknowledges the significance of the cave paintings: "those paintings must of been worth a fortune." In response to Item 3 he notes that his picture "shows how people and animals survive." He is able to see how cave pictures are reflective of the life of prehistoric animals and people.

Generalizing from the boys' actions to the universals of courage and patience, the reader draws on ideas from the text to apply to his own life, "I learned courage from them because they were never afraid. I learned patience because they had to wait for four days."

In defending his choice of the first picture in response to Item 6 (a caveman drawing pictures), he draws inferences from subtle cues: It "tells what the boys were thinking. They imagined it might of been cavemen who drew these pictures." The reader moves from the literal facts of the text to another layer of complexity as he considers what the boys are thinking in light of their discovery.

This paper reflects many of the performances typical of an exemplary reading; it is insightful, discerning, and perceptive as it explores possibilities of meaning and develops connections between the story and the reader's own ideas.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I think they should not go in because they do not have any supplies. I mean what if they fall and cannot get back up? They need rope and other stuff that will help them.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

Do you mean they go to the same house for dinner?
It looks like Simon is the smart one and Marcel is the spirited one. Marcel wants to do it so quickly that he doesn't think of what can happen to them until Simon reminds him.
That's a good idea. I wouldn't have thought of that myself.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I agree with Simon because I don't think they are professional explorers. Also, they should tell someone because what if they get trapped or killed before they get to tell about this amazing discovery? What if they die before they get famous for finding all of this?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

I hope I get to go here some day. Maybe I can meet one of the boys that discovered this place. Then I can tell them how much I know about them. I hope they are still alive.

Jenny Wood. *"An Amazing Discovery," Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story? *

I think this story would be good in a tourist manual because I'm sure many people that go to France would like to go to Lascaux Cave. I would like to go to Lascaux Cave myself so I can meet the real boys, Marcel, Simon, Georges, and Jacques, and tell them that I read a story about them and their amazing discovery.

I wonder if me and my friends would once discover a wonderful thing and get rich and famous. Then Jenny Wood could write a story about me and my friends and the wonderful discovery we discovered.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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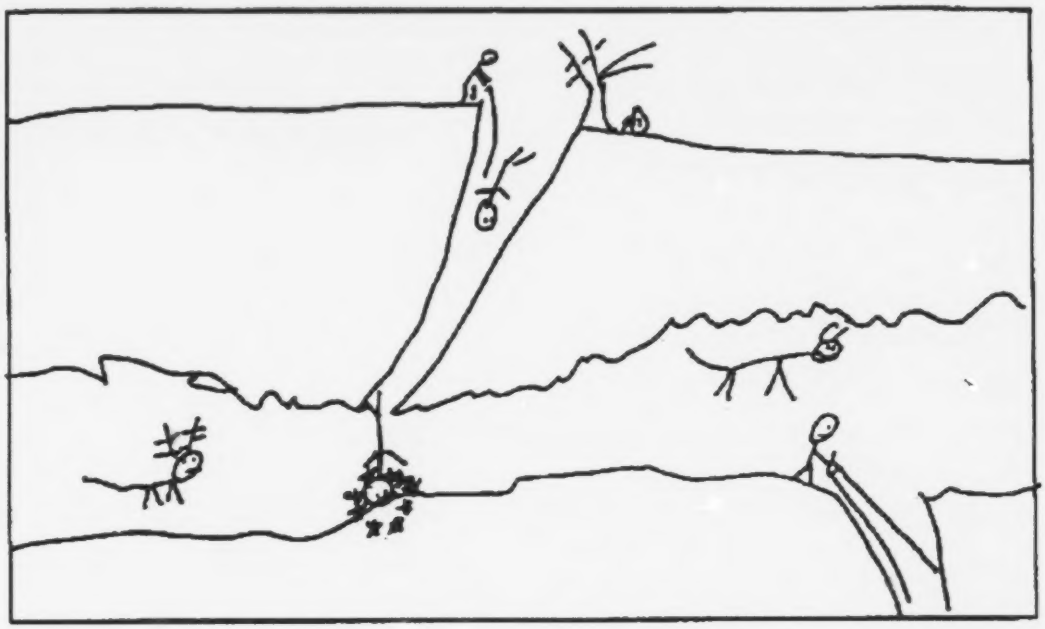
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

Marcel found a deep hole near a dead tree. They came back another day with rope and a lamp. They went down the hole and saw dots and lines on the wall. But they turned out to be paintings.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. Did it hurt when you fell through the hole?

b. How big was the whole chamber?

c. How many paintings were there?

d. Was the cave very spooky?

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

Just because your young, doesn't mean you can't be an explorer. I learned that no matter what the problem or situation you are in, you should always be brave. Like when the four boys were exploring the cave, they were brave. They also used their ingenuity.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

The story wasn't about a caveman painting the walls, it was about four friends that discovered a secret cave and explored it. It did mention cavemen, but it wasn't all about cavemen, it was about four kids that discovered caveman paintings.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 - Paper 2 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

I have had a great discovery before. It was a surprise birthday party for me.

Before my birthday, my family was acting very strange. They kept whispering to each other. But when I asked what was going on, they just said, "nothing."

On the day of my birthday, I came home and I heard a word, "surprise!" I discovered that my family was setting up a party for me all along. All my relatives were there and some of my friends, too. I discovered that I was having a suprise birthday party.

STOP!
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE!
This is the end of Section One.

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Commentary for Score Point 6 – Paper 2

Readers demonstrating score point 6 performances frequently enter into dialogue both with the text and with the author. This paper shows a student who enters immediately into the story by expressing his opinion and posing possibilities about "what might happen if…. " In these rich margin notes, the student continues to record questions, express opinions about the boys and their actions, and reflect his own nature.

We can follow this reader's thinking as he reacts to passages he has marked, "Do you mean they go to the same house for dinner?" The reader fills in gaps in light of his knowledge of human nature, concluding that "Simon is the smart one and Marcel is the spirited one." He draws conclusions from the evidence, as in the comment that "I don't think they are professional explorers… they should tell someone because what if they get trapped or killed…." This reader can distance himself from the text, posing possibilities and indicating his sense of learning: "Maybe I can meet one of the boys…. Then I can tell them how much I know about them."

The reader knows that this story is "about four kids that discovered caveman paintings" (response to Item 7), but he rethinks these facts. The story of this discovery he notes, "would be good in a tourist manual." The consequence of the boys' fame might be that he "can meet the real boys." Further, he knows that the significance of a famous find is that you "get rich and famous" and then authors like "Jenny Wood could write a story…."(response to Item 1)

Readers at an exemplary reading performance level are able to rethink the meaning of a text, seeing in it a more universal significance. "Just because your young," states this reader, "doesn't mean you can't be an explorer." He recognizes the courage and "ingenuety" of the four boys and understands "that no matter what the problem or situation you are in, you should always be brave."

This paper demonstrates, in a discerning and insightful reading, an understanding of the whole work as well as the ability to participate vicariously in the experience of the boys in the story.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery

by Jenny Wood

My thoughts, feelings and/or questions about what I'm reading*

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My feelings of this story are really exitid to read about a story I have never heard about, also I just love to read about a wonderful countery. I have read about in a different story

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

My thought to this page is thinking of what this hole is and why is it there. Also I wonder Jacks if Georges, Simon A, and Marcel are going to go down there.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

Well my thoughts tell me that I can't believe they went down there, But then I think I was wrong, because I would just love for me to go down and see caveman drawings. I just wonder whats going to happen next.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood. "An Amazing Discovery," *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

If I were the teacher, the extraordinary find would mean a great deal to me because I love to read, see, and travel to ancient places that relate to our history.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

My thoughts and feelings to this story make me think about ancient and old places that many people have been in. For example the mission we went to, indians and old priests have been in. I think if it had the chance to go and look at other things that old people had lived in it would be a great experiance to me.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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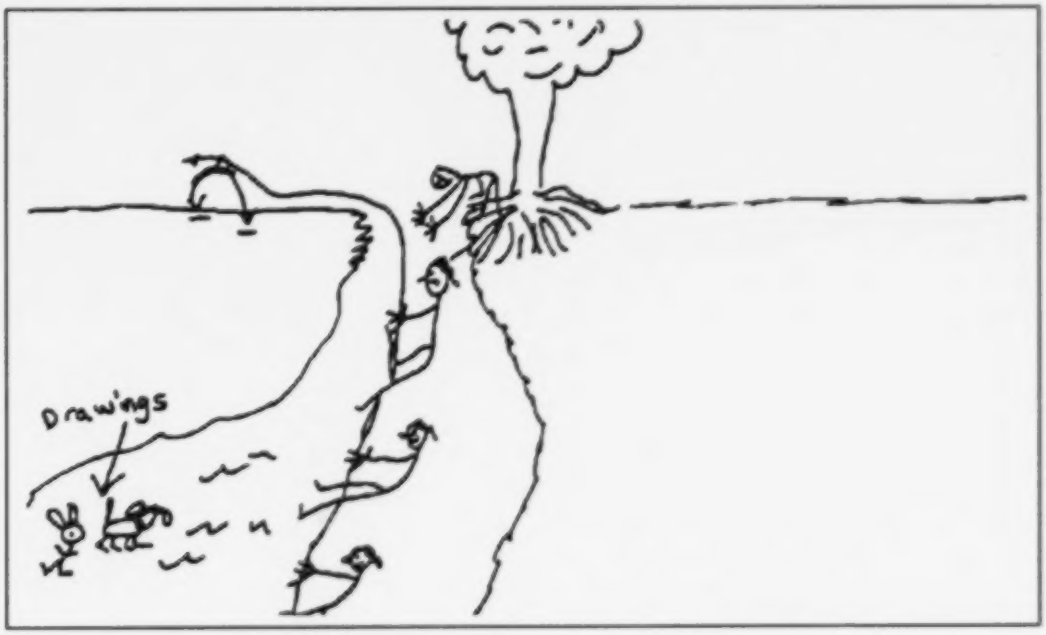
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

My Picture is when the four boys went down the hole to discover what this hole was. Also I drew the drawings the cavemen drew, that the four boys would discover when they got at the bottom of the hole.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

   a. What kinds of pictures did the cavemen draw other than the lines & dots?

   b. Was this a great experiance for all of you?

   c. What were your first thoughts when you saw the drawings?

   d.

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

I learned that there are many places where you can learn about the ancient days, like missions, castles, temples, hitorage hill, and the one and only King Tubbs tomb.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

I think this would be a better choice because 4 boys were looking in the cave the story didnt talk about a caveman drawing, well it did, but he wasn't drawing in the story it talked about the discoveries of along time ago. Also the caveman wasn't alive in the story.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 1 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

What this story means to me is, about the discovery of the drawing it relates to my life because one time at the beach I discovered a flower under the ground when I was making a sand castle. so I discovered because something also I like this story alot cause its about France and about French people.

STOP!
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE!
This is the end of Section One.

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Commentary for Score Point 5 Response - Paper 1

A reader performing at score point 5 is discerning, thorough, and perceptive but shows less insight or sensitivity to the nuances and complexities in a text than is evident in an exemplary performance.

The reader's marginal comments begin as little more than retellings and superficial connections with the text: "I just love to read about a wonderful country I have read about in a different story.... If I were the teacher, the extraordinary find would mean a great deal to me." There is, however, clear evidence in responses to items 2 and 3 that the reader understands the gist of the story: "I drew the drawings the cavemen drew, that the four boys would discover when they got at the bottom of the hole."

Readers achieving score point 5 see a connection between their own ideas, experience and knowledge, and the world of the text, as this reader does in response to Item 5: "I learned that there are many places where you can learn about the ancient days, like missions, castles, temples, hiterage hill, and the one and only King Tubbs tomb."

In a discerning performance, readers make plausible assumptions from subtle cues. The questions in response to Item 4 reveal that the reader wants to know more—he wants to fill the gaps: "What kinds of pictures did the cavemen draw other than the lines & dots?" "Was this a great experience for all of you?" "What were your first thoughts when you saw the drawings?"

In response to Item 7 the reader explains her choice of the second picture (the boy with the lantern) by using clues and inferences from the text to substantiate her choice "... the story didn't talk about a cavemen drawing, well it did, but he wasn't drawing in the story it talked about the discoveries of along time ago."

The final response begins as a restatement but expands a bit by acknowledging that this story is "about France and about French people." She connects her own chance discovery of a flower under the ground with the chance discovery of the Lascaux drawings.

Taken together, the evidence points to a thorough and perceptive performance but with less-revealed insight than that required of an exemplary performance.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

What may be in the hole?
How did the hole get there?
I wonder if it does go down to the bowels of the earth!
I feel that they should investigate the hole.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I think they might go in and they're scared

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I wonder why they didn't explore today? How did they make those signs? Who did them.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I wonder if the story is true? Were the boys scared?

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

I feel that the boys made a great discovery and shall be proud of there selves. I think this story is nice to read also. I am glad they investigated the hole. That is not they would run into something like that. I wonder if when the boys went down, if they were scared? I would have been scared. I feel that the boys were real brave venturing into the cave. I feel that they could have decided to not tell anybody and still feel the same. I feel that if I were in there place I would quit or without a grownup. I think the thoughts about the caveman are a good idea. I don't think I would have thought like that. Amen.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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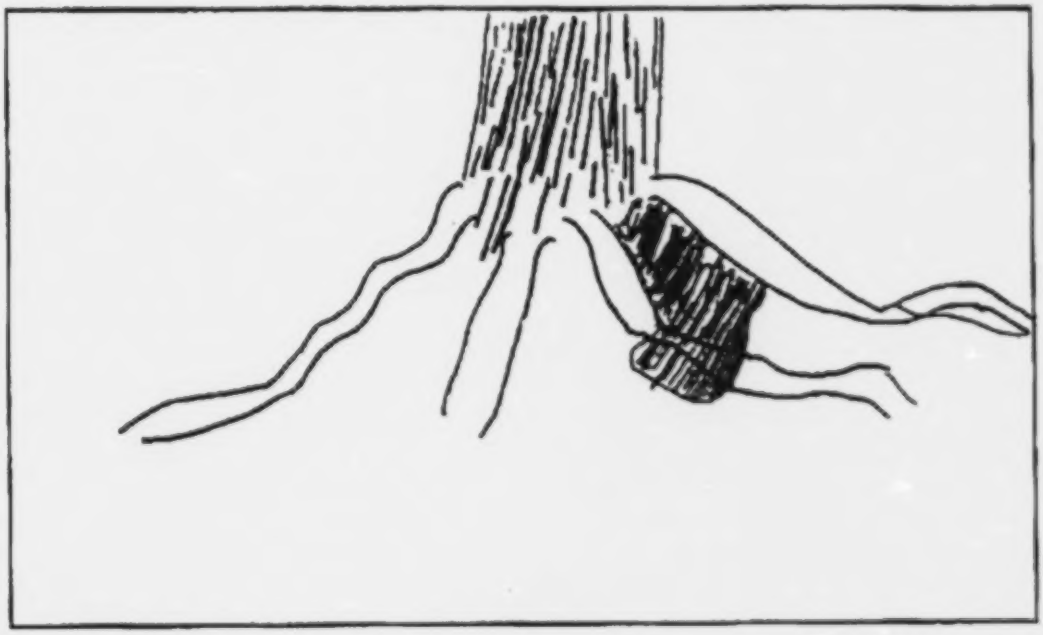
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

The cave was the discovery in the story.
That was the reason it down the cave.
This story didn't describe anything but
it was under dead roots of oak tree. They
did not say how many roots there were or
how big the hole is so I just it what they

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. Were you startled when you found the cave, Marcel?

b. Was widening the opening hard work, Simon?

c. Was it fun falling into the cave, Georges?

d. Jacques, did you learn from this experience?

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

I learned curiosity pays sometimes. It is good to be adventurous. People wont believe you all the time. You can stumble upon something any time. Maybe one day you'll be walking around and you'll stumble over lots of ancient things. Like if you see a hole be adventerous and go in.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

The other pictures was only talked about in the story. The picture I chose really happend in the story. So there for since it took place it was more important. Also they weren't even sure it was a caveman who drew the paintings on the walls. It could be another person, like an Indian who had lived there.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 - Paper 2 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

It means anybody can find anything. It means if you want to do something you can do it. It reminds me of newspaper articles I read one sunday. It also reminds me of a cave I once saw. This story does not really tell anything close to the life I lead so far. This is a good story for me to remember though. It has people with alot of courage, strength, awareness, and helpful people who work together. I think it would have been fun to install over the hole and paintings on the walls.

STOP!
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This is the end of Section One.

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Commentary for Score Point 5 Response - Paper 2

A reader performing at score point 5 is discerning, thorough, and perceptive but shows less insight or sensitivity to the nuances and complexities in a text than is evident in an exemplary performance. It is important to remember, however, that each score point encompasses a range of performances. This paper, while warranting a score point five, is not as strong a five as the previous paper.

This reader's margin comments appear to be little more than text bound inquiries intended to assist his processing of the text, "What may be in the hole....How did the hole get there.... Were the boys scared?" In response to Item 1, however, the reader is able to articulate conclusions drawn from his reading of the text, "I wonder if when the boys went down they were scared.... I feel that if I were in their place I wouldn't go without a grownup.... I think the thought about the caveman was a good idea."

In response to Item 3, the reader grounds his understanding in the literal details in the text, e.g., the number of tree roots and the size of the hole. In response to Item 4, the reader attempts to fill gaps in his understanding as he questions the boys: "Were you startled when you found the cave...? Was widening the opening hard work...?"

The reader moves into a more generalized consideration of the text in response to Item 5, fitting this text with his own ideas, experience, and knowledge: "I learned curiosity pays of sometimes. Its good to be adventurios. People wont believe you all the time." Further, this reader is able to use the text to expand upon ideas, noting the randomness of stumbling upon the unexpected: "You can stumble upon something any time."

In a discerning reading performance, readers explore multiple possibilities of meaning. In response to Item 7, this reader observes that "they weren't even sure it was a caveman who drew the paintings on the walls. It could," this skeptical reader speculates, "be another person, like an Indian who had lived there."

In the final response the reader steps out of the text to explore the universal implications of the passage: "It means anybody can find anything. It means if you want to do something you can do it." This story, the reader notes, is "good for me to remember" because "It has people with alot of courage, strength, braveness, and helpful people who work together."

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I feel excited on what will happen next and what they will do, I'm wondering If they will go down in the hole.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

My thoughts, feelings and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I would be scared and I don't think I would want to go down in because there might be something dangerous in it.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I would want to go in again and see everything and keep it a secret and then go down and explore everything In the hole

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood. "An Amazing Discovery," *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

It would be totally neat to find a big cave and I think the boys should explore everything in it and mak something out of it, it sure would be neat.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

It would be awsome to make such a neat discovery and to see anciant things. I always thaught deep holes were neat to go in to but these or the neatest. I think I would be rad. I would do everything possible to find out more stuff about this discovery.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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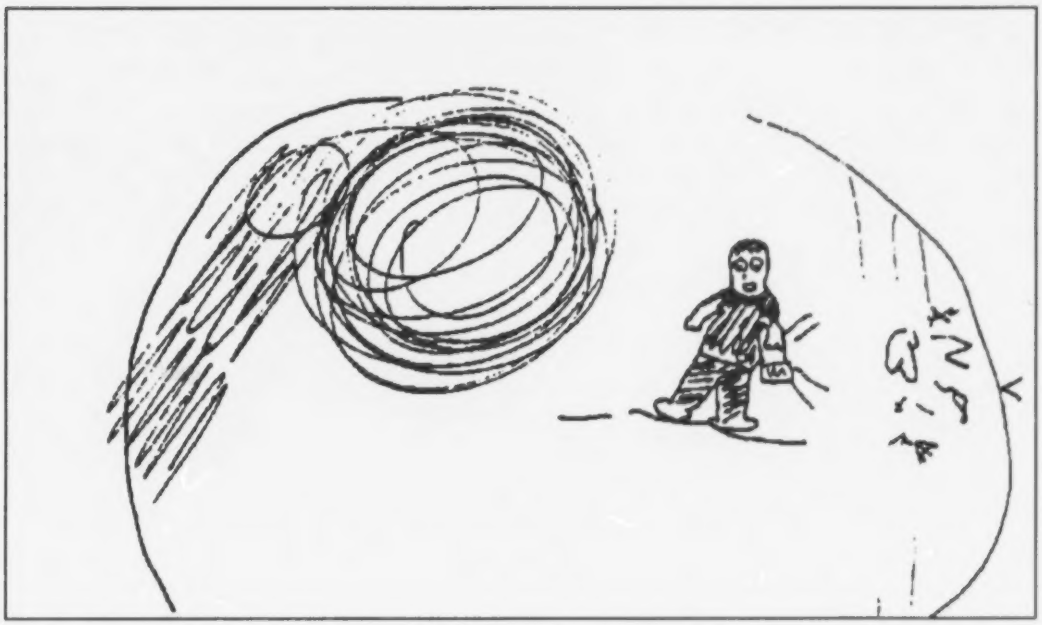
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

It is one of the boys coming out of the whole and seeing the paintings of the prehistoric paintings.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. How did you find the hole?

b. What did you do when you were in the hole?

c. What were your feilings when you went in?

d. Why did you tell your teacher about the hole?

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

I learned that you should learn to explore stuff and find more about the unknown. I learned you should try more things from stuff you dont know about.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

In the story it didn't say cavemen were in it carving paintings. The story didn't say the boys saw or met an old man carving things.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 1 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

It is neat and it should be told to people and this relates to me because I like to find stuff and I like to dig and go down holes and other old, neat things. It would be totally neat to find an old cave and find stuff I would be jazzed.

STOP!
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE!
This is the end of Section One.

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Commentary for Score Point 4 Response - Paper 1

Readers at score point 4 construct a thoughtful and plausible interpretation of the text. In this performance there is evidence of immediate engagement with the text, revealed in the margins as questions and rephrasings that parallel the action of the text, as in, "I'm wondering if they will go down in the hole. I would be scared.... would want to go in again... and keep it a secret.... I think the boys should explore everything... it sure would be neat." The reader is clearly able to follow the story line of the text and connect this understanding with his personal experience and knowledge: "I would do everything possible to find more stuff about this discovery." (Item 1)

The reader knows that the discovery is "of the prehistoric paintings." In response to Item 4, however, the reader goes beyond the literal facts of the text when he questions, "What were your feelings when you went in? Why did you tell your teacher about the hole?"

In response to Item 5, the reader generalizes: "I learned that you should learn to explore stuff and find more about the unknown. I learned you should try more things from stuff you dont know about." The reader has made an interesting but predictable response without the depth of understanding of a five or six response.

In response to Item 8, the reader recounts actions that parallel the story: "I like to find stuff and I like to dig and go down holes.... It would be totally neat to find an old cave and find stuff." Although there is evidence that the reader understands the work as a whole, his understanding of the text has remained fixed. He has accepted the text without exploring the possibilities of meaning usually evidenced in higher score points.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I wonder why he wanted them to come?
I wonder what it is.
What if he falls down the hole?
What if something grabs them.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Why were people talking about it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

What if something happens.

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

What if it really does go all the way down

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

How did the oil lamp survive?

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

I wonder why the walls were covered with paintings

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

I disagree with him there might be something down there.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

I wonder what the gallery was used for?

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

Why did they wait later?

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

How do you know?

Jenny Wood. "An Amazing Discovery." *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

my thoughts are, this story really interested me but, I disagree with how the author kinda made it scary

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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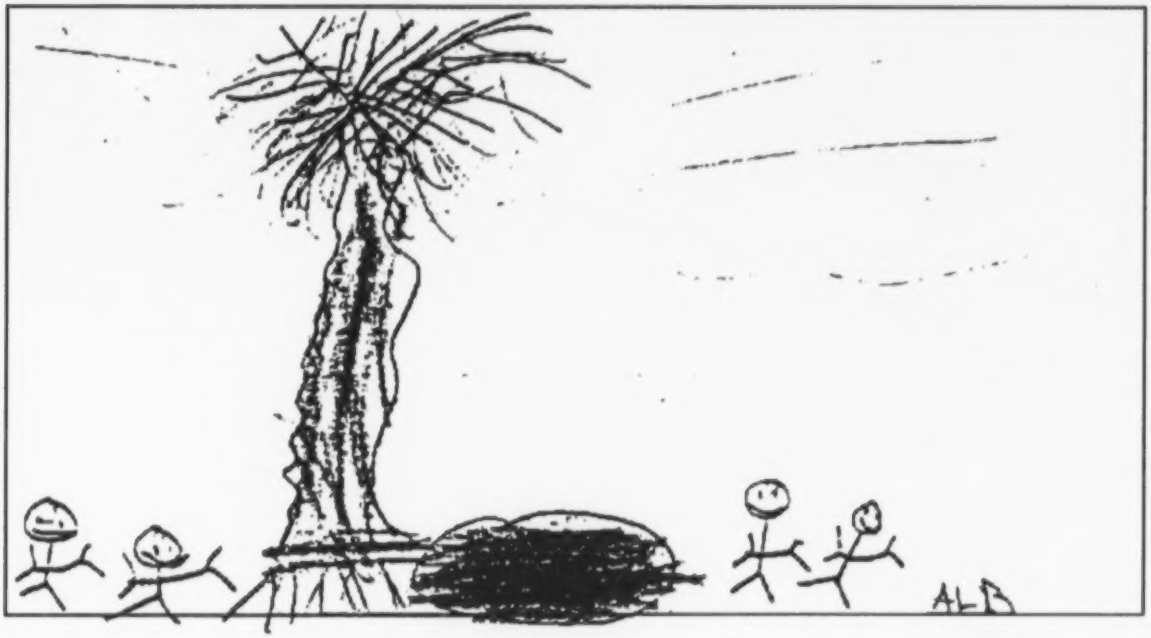
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

This is my imanagnation of the picture. There is a dead tree with a black hole and the leader talking about it.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. How did you fell when you found this?

b. Were you guys planning to find this cave?

c. How old were you guys when you guys found the cave

d. Is there anything you would like to include?

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

I learned don't give up. I learned there were prehistoric pepole.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

I think it is a good choice because they went down and the oil lamp survived, and they looked around.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 - Paper 2 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

This is a story that reminds me of a time that I wanted to be an archeologist.

Is this a non fiction story?

I wish I was in this story. I think they were 9 years old at this time.

STOP!
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE!
This is the end of Section One.

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Commentary for Score Point 4 Response - Paper 2

This paper gives evidence of an engaged and thoughtful reading of the text. The margin comments begin with simplistic queries: "I wonder why he wanted them to come.... What if he falls down the hole? What if something happens." On page five, she begins a more thoughtful interplay as she examines the degree of fit between the text and her own experience: "How did the oil lamp survive?" The reader states an opinion—"I disagree with him [Marcel]," urging caution in the face of the unknown: "there might be something down there." Generally, the reader raises many questions but most remain unexamined. Instead, they function as restatements and memory assists.

In response to Item 1, the reader reacts to the suspense of the story: "I disagree with how the author kinda made it scary," but does not elaborate on her reaction. In her responses to items 2 and 3, the reader introduces the concept of a "leader," evidence of some generalizing about the behavior of the boys, but again the evidence is thin.

There is evidence that the reader sees a wider application of the facts of the text: "I learned don't give up. I learned there were prehistoric people. " The reader's last response continues to express engagement with the text: "Is this a non-fiction story?" She answers her own question, posed earlier in Item 4, with "I think they were 9 years old at the time." The reader also brings in prior knowledge with, "This is a story that reminds me of a time that I wanted to be an archeologist."

This is a typical performance of a reader who sees something beyond the literal facts but does not bring to the performance the depth of understanding characteristic of a higher performance.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

The dark hole and it look goes right down to the bowel of the earth.

why did Jacques peered down to the pasage?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I was excited

The hole is very deep and they throw some stone and long time roll down the stone

why did they go down to the deep ?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

I was excited

The painting must have been made by caveman thousand of years ago

why did they now they were in huge underground chamber?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood. "An Amazing Discovery," *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

The wall was both cave painting of the cave who is the first scientest work in the cave?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

I'm very excited and the cave have painting made by caveman

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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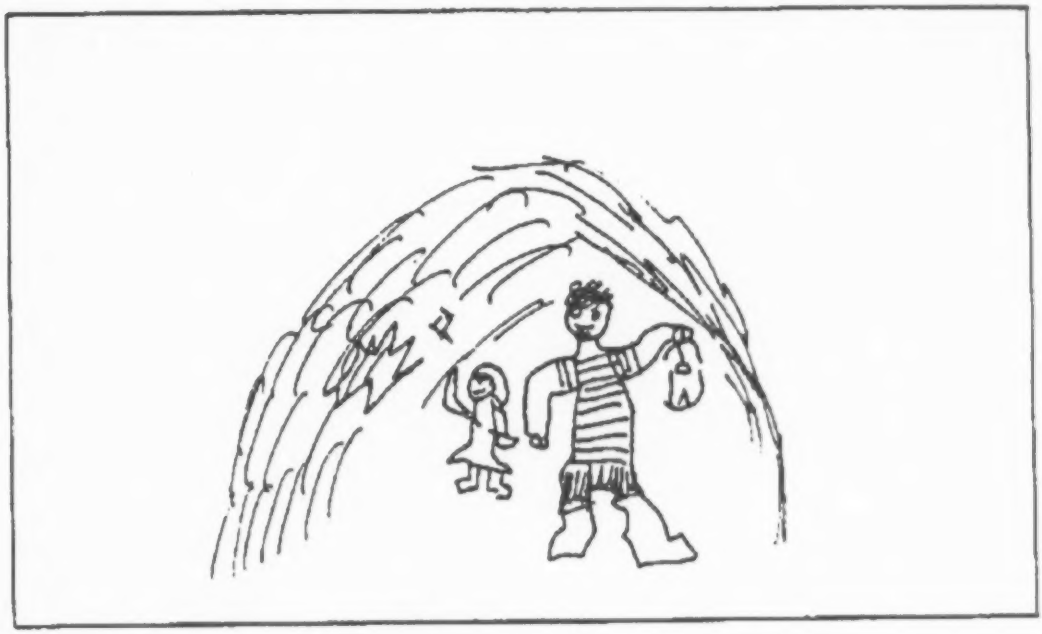
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

They Discover some painting made by the caveman

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. What is the first painting you discover

b. What kind of painting did you see?

c. How deep is the hole

d. What time you see the deep hole

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

Tell to other people what you see

Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

Because that picture is in the story.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 1 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

The other people can see the painting of the caveman.

If the is my own life I will descoved all the painting

Commentary for Score Point 3 Response - Paper 1

Readers performing at score point 3 are literal readers, constructing plausible but superficial interpretations of the text. This reader's margin comments and questions are tied tightly to the text, as in "Why did Jacques peered down to the pasage?... Why did they go down to the deep... Why did they now they were in huge underground chamber?"

The reader understands that there is a dark hole, that it is deep and that this hole leads to a painting that "must have been made by caveman thousand of years ago." The student comprehends that these paintings are available to the public: "The other people can see the painting of the caveman."

There is little evidence in this reading of sensitivity to the complexities of the text. The reader makes a superficial generalization when he states that he learned "To tell to other people what you see."

A characteristic of a score point three performance is that connections with the text are associational and unexamined, as in the response to Item 8. When asked how the text relates to his own life, he states, "I will discover all the paintings." This reader, having made some initial sense of the text, has retained a simplistic view throughout his responses.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

Was there a underground passageway.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

Why didn't Simon want to go down?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

How did they know that the paintings where from cavemen?

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

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If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood."An Amazing Discovery." *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

I thought they where not going to tell anybody about there discovery. Also my feeling about this story were good because I didn't think anyone would get hurt or in trouble.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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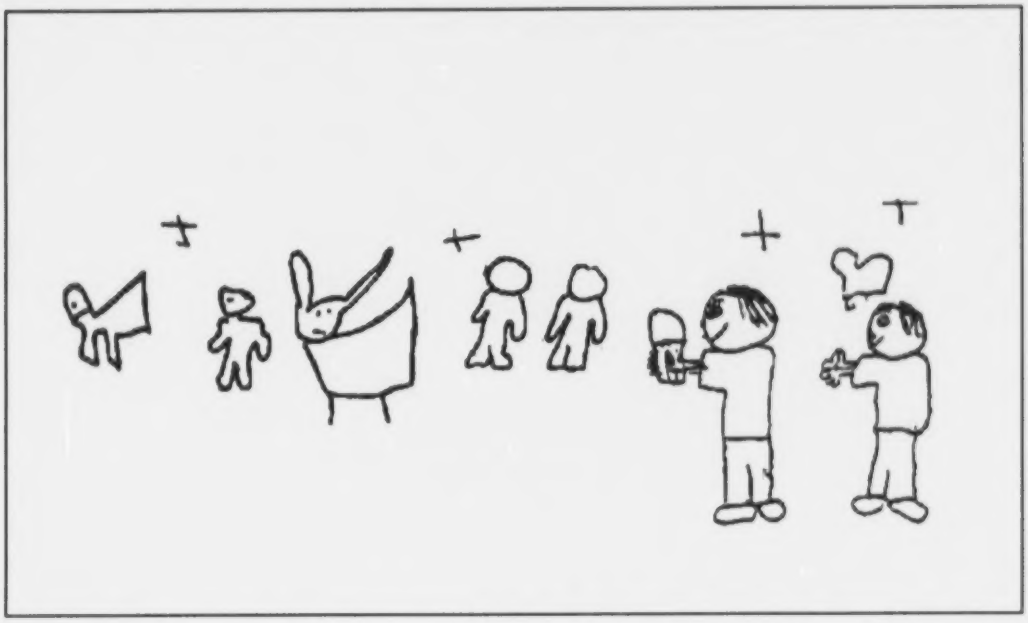
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

The drawing are cavemen pictures and the people a Simon and George

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. Would you let people look at it?

b.

c.

d.

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

I learned that cavemen really live because they got to the cave and there were lots of pictures.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

I circled that picture because it had a caveman and some pictures and the story had to do with caveman pictures.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3 - Paper 2 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

I also wanted to know if it will be theirs for ever.

Commentary for Score Point 3 Response - Paper 2

The student's margin notes reflect a score point 3 by constructing a plausible but superficial interpretation of the text. Comments such as "Why didn't Simon want to go down?...my feelings ... were good because I didn't think anyone would get hurt or in trouble" show personal connections with the text but are general and not explained.

The mention of a "discovery" in response to Item 1 and the picture and explanation in response to items 2 and 3 provide evidence of some understanding of the whole work, a major characteristic of score point three. This understanding is supported by response to Item 5: "I learned that cavemen really live because there were lots of pictures."

Taken together, the responses show a literal reading of the story with very little exploration beyond this prosaic reading. This reader has made initial sense of the text and has retained her view without revision. She is textually locked in, seeing little beyond the literal facts of the story.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

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Time to Read

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by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

Marcel shouted to his friends. Come and look at this.

there was a dead tree. there was a hole under the tree.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood. *"An Amazing Discovery," Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

After You Have Read

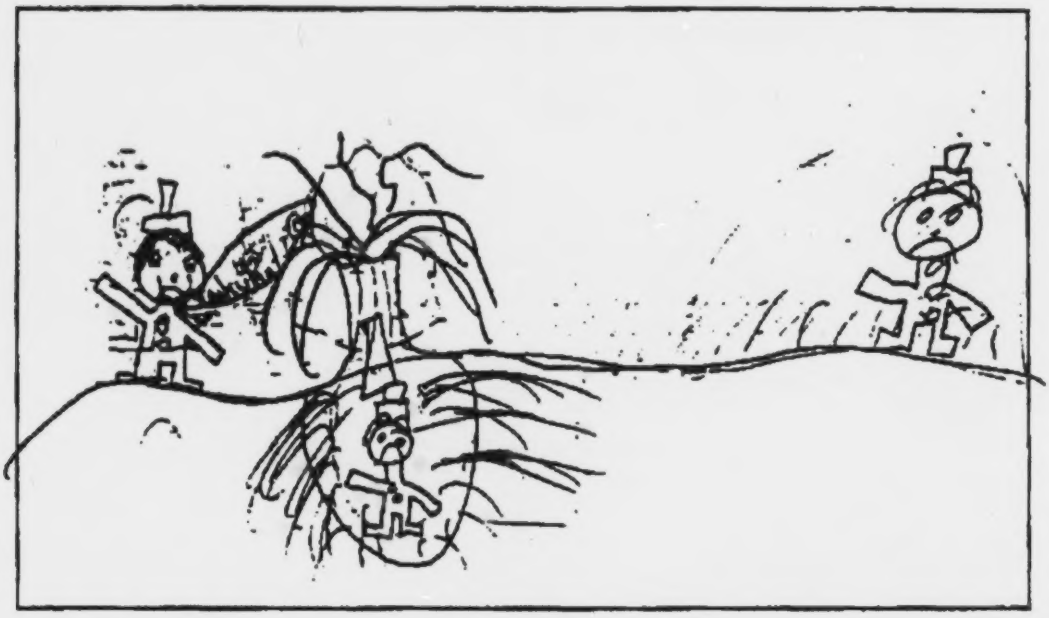
1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

I think my feelings and thoughts are that Marcel shouted to his friends because there was a dead tree And then Jaques seen a strange hole under the tree and that hole did seem to have no end And it was dark in the hole.

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

I did when Marcel is shouting to his friends to come and see what he found and it was a dead tree and then they seen a strange hole under the tree and the went in there it was dark

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. Macel why was there a hole under the dead tree.

b. Jaques where you scared when you went in the hole

c. Georges did you found eneything down that hole.

d. Simon would you tell someone about what ya found

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

I learn that the boys where the first explorers to go down to the hole.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

I think the picture I chose was the best because it looks like the hole. And Georges had a oil lamp in his hand.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

this means to me is that why was a the tree dead. Itreminds me of going in side in the hole and get allot of gold in the hole.

It relates me why they didn't go to school those days.

Commentary for Score Point 2 Response

In a limited reading performance, readers generally focus on one segment or one idea of the text. This reader begins by quoting words directly from the text :"Marcel shouted to his friends come and look at this". From this point on, almost every response relates directly to the small segment of the text which the reader copies in the margin: "there was a dead tree. there was a hole under the tree."

There is some meager evidence of connections to other events in the text: "...the boys where the first explorers to go down to the hole,"and "Georges had a oil lamp in his hand," but there is no evidence that she grasped the gist or "whole" of the text.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1

Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

JLRo

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *My thoughts and/or questions about what I am reading.*

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading*

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood. "An Amazing Discovery," *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about this story?*

DO

*In the test for 1994, this wording has been changed to: *What are your thoughts and/or questions about this story?*

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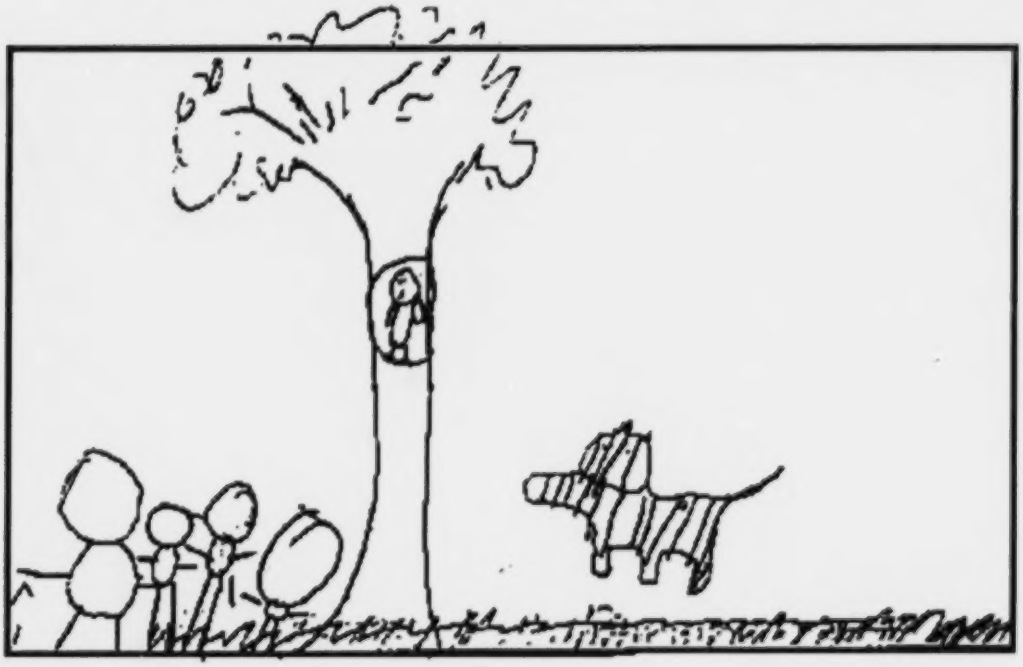
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.



3. Explain your picture.

The Fox Boy are going to climb th tree

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. did you go camping

b. did you go fishing

c. did you go zoo

d. did you go swimming

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

yes

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

It Took nice
It good to go caming

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1 (continued)

8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

I find money all the time

Commentary for Score Point 1 Response

In this minimal reading performance, the reader does not give evidence of even a rudimentary understanding of the text. The student's drawing and explanation indicates that "the for boys are going to climb tree." The reader has made a connection to the words *tree* and *four boys*, but there is no evidence of how these words relate to the story. The questions posed in responseto Item 4 —- "did you go camping, fishing, swimming and to the zoo"— are tangential associations with the boys and the tree.

The responses to items 7 and 8, "It good to go camping" and "I find money all the time,"have no clear connection to the text. There is no additional evidence to suggest even a partial or reductive understanding of this passage; it is clearly a minimal reading performance.

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III. Elementary Writing Assessment

The essays in this section of the sampler were written by California fourth graders in the spring of 1993 and scored by California classroom teachers in summer of 1993. The essays illustrate the scoring standards of the California Learning Assessment System's writing assessment.

A set of six essays, representing score points 6 through 1, is included for each type of writing assessed: Expressive and Persuasive. All essays are reproduced as the students wrote them, without changing spelling or punctuation. Commentary is provided for each essay.

The essays were chosen to represent the rhetorical effectiveness scoring standard for each type of writing. The rhetorical effectiveness score reflects writers' understanding of the familiar, but unique, writing situations identified by the types of writing listed above. Each of these writing situations requires of students a special way of thinking and composing. The scoring guides for these types of writing are included in this sampler.

A single essay at a score point can illustrate only one of many ways to reach that level of achievement. For example, many different kinds of essays can be awarded a score of 6—essays with quite different rhetorical strategies, tones, points of view, patterns, beginnings, and endings. Teachers can readily supplement the single essay illustrating each score point with other essays written by students at your school.

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Expressive Writing

Expressive writing deals with observations, ideas and memories. It is close to speech. It covers an extended range of kinds of writing from a journal or diary to more extensive writings intended to be read by others. It may describe a scene or explore the significance of a person, object, or memory. This writing may be descriptive, reflective, exploratory or even persuasive in nature. It often incorporates the narrative strategies of autobiography or story. It is developmentally appropriate for young writers because it allows them to use writing as a way to develop fluency, to discover and clarify what they think, and to grow in their ability to perceive and reflect.

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Rhetorical Effectiveness Scoring Guide

for

Expressive Writing

"This is what I see, think, and remember..."

Expressive writing deals with observations, ideas, feelings, and memories. It is close to speech. It covers an extended range of kinds of writing from a journal or diary to more extensive writings intended to be read by others.

For our assessment purposes, expressive writing involves observations, thoughts, or reflections. It may describe a scene or explore the significance of a person, object, or memory. These pieces may be descriptive, reflective, exploratory or persuasive in nature. They may be informative in the sense that the writer conveys specific information about a subject or event. They often incorporate the narrative strategies of autobiography or story. Such writings generally exhibit more informal organization and language patterns than those found in the other types of writing.

Expressive writing provides a foundation and is the precursor for all the other, more formal kinds of writing assessed by CLAS. It is important developmentally for fourth grade students because it allows young writers to use writing as a way to develop fluency, to discover and clarify what they think, and to grow in their ability to perceive and reflect.

For the CLAS assessment, expressive writing involves observations, thoughts, or reflections. Writers may describe a scene or explore the significance of a person, object, or memory. These pieces may be descriptive, reflective, exploratory, or persuasive in nature. They may be informative in the sense that the writer conveys specific information about a subject or event. Often writers incorporate the narrative strategies of autobiography or story. Expressive writing generally exhibits more informal organization and language patterns than those found in the other types of writing.

Evident in all effective writing are qualities that underlie the specific rhetorical characteristics assessed by CLAS through the four broad categories of writing — expressive, narrative, persuasive, and informative. In general, good writing:

- Exhibits clear thinking
- Is coherent and cohesive
- Uses sensory and concrete details
- Uses appropriate examples and other kinds of elaboration
- Reflects an authentic voice
- Uses vocabulary appropriate to purpose and audience
- Uses well-formed and varied sentences

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Score Point 6

Focus/Coherence

Writers demonstrate facility in expressing ideas, observations, and memories. The writing flows naturally and is understandable. There may be shifts in focus, but the shifts are easy to follow.

Exploration of Ideas/Presentation

Writers explore ideas which may lead to new insights. They appear to be engaged and may take risks while reshaping ideas. The writing vividly reveals thoughts, feelings, images and details. It often demonstrates insightful and reflective thinking. To recreate an event or experience for the reader, writers may use narrative strategies such as depicting actions or using dialogue, description, sensory details, characters' thoughts and feelings. Writers use relevant and significant details that enable readers to imagine the world within which an event or experience occurs.

Voice/Style

Writers use lively and concrete language. They often write in a conversational tone, revealing an individual and authentic voice. Exceptional papers show a flair resulting from interesting ideas expressed in an original and artful way.

Score Point 5

Focus/Coherence

Writers demonstrate facility in expressing ideas, observations, and memories. The writing flows naturally and is understandable.

Exploration of Ideas/Presentation

As in a score point 6 paper, writers also explore ideas, but may take fewer risks to shape ideas. The writing demonstrates insightful and reflective thinking, but with less acute awareness than in a score point 6 paper. Writers may recreate an event or experience by using narrative strategies; use of relevant details and ideas enable the reader to imagine the world of the story, but may not do so as richly as in a score point 6 paper.

Voice/Style

Writers use lively and concrete language, but with less sophistication than a score point 6 paper. The writing is conversational and natural, often revealing an individual and authentic voice with only minor lapses or inconsistencies.

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Score Point 4

Focus/Coherence

Writers demonstrate an adequate performance in expressing ideas, observations, and memories. The writing is coherent, but lacks the ease and fluency shown by writers of a score point 5 or 6 paper.

Exploration of Ideas/Presentation

Writers develop ideas in a somewhat predictable fashion but show some engagement in exploring thoughts. The writing may reveal flashes of interesting thinking or a vivid impression, but develops ideas less fully. The writing may show some evidence of thoughtful attention to the requirements of the prompt. Many writers use narrative strategies in establishing a context for an autobiographical or fictional response, but these writers may either use details that overbalance the ideas or may be sparse in the use of details. Most details are functional and serve to further a narrative line; there may be some irrelevant or insignificant details. Characters and/or events are presented clearly, enabling readers to follow the line of thought.

Voice/Style

For the most part, writers use commonplace language. They write naturally and simply, revealing an individual voice.

Score Point 3

Focus/Coherence

Writers demonstrate less fluency than is characteristic of the higher score points. The writing may ramble or rely on listing either a collection of details or generalizations.

Exploration of Ideas/Presentation

Writers explore few ideas and thoughts and usually show little engagement. The writing rarely shows evidence of thinking that goes beyond statement of ideas or narration of events. Writers may place an action or event in a vague context; readers may be unsure about either the time or the place. Writers may rely on narrative strategies, but often lack a beginning or satisfactory closure. Some details may be irrelevant.

Voice/Style

The piece is usually written in a flat, uninvolved voice. The writing shows some lack of control in handling word choice.

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Score Point 2

Focus/Coherence

Writers demonstrate a halting, fragmented expression of ideas. The piece is brief, thin, or insubstantial. The writing may either start or stop abruptly and show evidence of major organizational problems.

Exploration of Ideas/Presentation

These writers barely explore ideas and thoughts, often showing simple free associations with the prompt title or a single word. They demonstrate little engagement. The writing shows little or no evidence of exploration of ideas. In some papers, there is a bare suggestion for the context of ideas; in some cases, however, the paper is all context. Virtually no narrative strategies are used although details may be strung together in a rambling, pointless manner.

Voice/Style

Writers use highly simplistic language and limited word choice. Little sense of voice.

Score Point 1

Focus/Coherence

Writers demonstrate little or no evidence of fluency or coherence. The writing may be garbled and impossible to understand, except for occasional words or phrases.

Exploration of Ideas/Presentation

Writers may merely state a subject or an idea with no development. There is no evidence of any exploration of ideas or use of any narrative strategies. There will be few if any details, although occasionally a paper will present a list of details that have no discernible relevance to an idea.

Voice/Style

Language may be confused or garbled; word choice is meager. Little or no discernible voice.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6

Dear _____,

Sometimes I wish to see things I dont usually see out my window. I dont just want to see a plain old house. I want to se exitment. I wish to see rides and people having fun. Watching people having fun might get boring. I think it might get boring watching people having fun out my window because I dont like looking at the same thing every day. Sometimes I wish to see a nice peaceful forest. The forest might have wild beautiful animals. I would not see rides or exitement. There could be a lake by the forest. I would here the birds singing their songs.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 (continued)

There could be fire wolves that might look freaky. Maybe I'd rather see someting else out my window. What else would I want to see? I would Maybe want to see the future. The future might be nice and clean with robots running things. Maybe the future would be all messed up. The Earth would be all polluted. There might be no earth at all! I'm not sure what the future would look like. I would really wish to see a whole land made out of candy. It could have a Huge banana split. I would want to see mountains covered with chocolate. I could sail on a boat made out of

Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 (continued)

candy cane on a slurpe ocean
I might get sick of looking
at candy. I wish I could see
the Mexican War for Independence.
My grandpa was a Indian
leader back then. Most of
all I would want to see
that plain old house in my
plain old neiborghood.

Your Best Friend,

© California Department of Education

Commentary for Score Point 6 Response

Expressive writing deals with observations, ideas, thoughts, and reflections. It is intended to be exploratory rather than definitive. Expressive writing prompts ask students to write within a loosely-structured framework, giving young writers an opportunity to explore their own ideas on subjects of their own choosing.

In this exceptional paper, the writer uses this opportunity to explore thoughts while sitting and looking out a window. He moves immediately from the reality of "a plain old house" to a series of imaginary scenes: people having fun, a nice peaceful forest, the future, with "robots running things." When the writer becomes uncertain about the future, he shifts to contemplating a "whole land made out of candy." After considering the possibility of seeing the Mexican War for Independence, where his grandpa was an Indian leader, he returns to the reality of his initial scene, "that plain old house" in his neighborhood.

What makes this paper an exemplary score point 6 in expressive writing is the writer's facility in expressing his thoughts. The writing flows naturally as it moves from reality to fantasy to history and back to reality. The writer uses a natural, conversational tone with appropriate word choices.

Throughout the piece, the writer appears to be shaping and reshaping his ideas in an insightful and reflective manner. It is coherent and cohesive and reflects an authentic voice characteristic of a confident, exceptional writing performance.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5

What a discovery I made!!!! About two years ago I discovered hockey. It was when my dad was watching a hockey game because when he was at a Flyers game when the Flyers won the Stanley Cup. I came over to him and said, "What are you watching, Daddy?" So he said he was watching a hockey game. I sat down and watched the game and I thought it was great. My family went to two Kings playoff games. I got to meet a few of the players. My favorite players are Wayne Gretzky and Jari Kurri. I think hockey is the best sport ever made. At school I always talk about hockey. The night I always will remember is the time I got a Wayne Gretzky game-used stick. I remember we were sitting down front and he glanced

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 (continued)

at me every so often. After the game he had brought his sticks out and he said, "I have a stick for you buddy." I was so happy I kept thanking him over and over. I play hockey right now. I play center and I also play street hockey. I have won three trophies and two medals. I was in a Wayne Gretzky article when he came back from an injury. Everybody knows about me loving hockey. That discovery was very important to me.

Commentary for Score Point 5 Response

In this commendable performance, the writer demonstrates facility in expressing ideas, observations, and feelings. The writer clearly maintains focus on the importance of discovering hockey, from the first sentence "What a discovery I made!!!!" to his conclusion: "That discovery was very important to me." This young writer ably uses lively and concrete language to describe the effects hockey has had on his life. He reports details about the moment of his discovery and relates an incident when Wayne Gretzky gave him a "game-used stick."

Although this paper effectively and engagingly documents the importance of hockey in his life, it does not explore ideas with the insight and originality of a score point 6 paper.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4

One day in 1992 I found a remote control truck. I wanted to know how it worked. So I asked my dad if I could use some of his tools he said "Ok" And I went to work taking the truck apart. When I was done I saw it worked by micro chips, wires lots of diffrent things that were very interesting It Made me feel so happy and amazed. I showed it to my dad he was very proud of me. And it was a wonderful feeling. I also learned something I learned you can make many diffrent discoveries if you put your mind and time to it.

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Commentary for Score Point 4 Response

In this paper the writer clearly addresses what she sets out to do—"to know how it (remote control truck) worked." The writing is clear and flows smoothly; however, the writer develops ideas in a somewhat predictable manner, with more *telling* than *showing*. The writing shows some evidence of reflective thinking when the writer concludes with "I learned you can make many different discoveries if you put your mind and time to it." In general, the writing shows interesting thinking but lacks the insight and exploratory quality of that found in higher papers.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3

I found Gold at my grandmas pand in Angels camp. I felt happy Because It was five pounds. It was vary fun because I got to spend it all. I got a New Bike. I got a Terbo hamer. I got what ever I wan't. My sister got what ever she wanted. My mom got what ever she wanted. My dad got what ever he wanted. My sister got a new Bike and new Close and new shows. I got new shows and close. I got a Trail O. My grandmas pound is dep it has fish and grass in it.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3

My grand mas pond is in Angels camp.

Commentary for Score Point 3 Response

This paper is typical of many score point 3 papers in its use of lists. After the writer announces that "I found gold at my grandma's pond," he uses the rest of the essay to list how the money from the gold is spent. There are a few details at the end that give a cursory description of the pond and its contents. The writer does not explore or reflect upon his observations and appears to be minimally engaged. This writer would benefit from extended opportunities to write in response journals that encourage reflective thinking.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2

Wine I look out my
Windw I can file the
arer hidhag ugnst my fase
and I don't thing uboat
anthing but wint my MOM
calls me I get mad and
I say Wute She siad
lates go to the bethe
ok I Siad it is niese to
be by My Widow

the End

Commentary for Score Point 2 Response

This paper demonstrates a halting, fragmented expression of ideas. The writer makes an attempt to explore his thoughts as he sits and looks out his window — "I can file the arer hiding ugnst my fase and I don't thing uboat anthing" and later when the writer adds "it is niese to be by my windw." However, the writing is too brief and thin to raise the paper to a higher score point. By having frequent opportunities to write in journals, diaries, and writers' notebooks, this writer will begin to develop more substantive expressive writing pieces.

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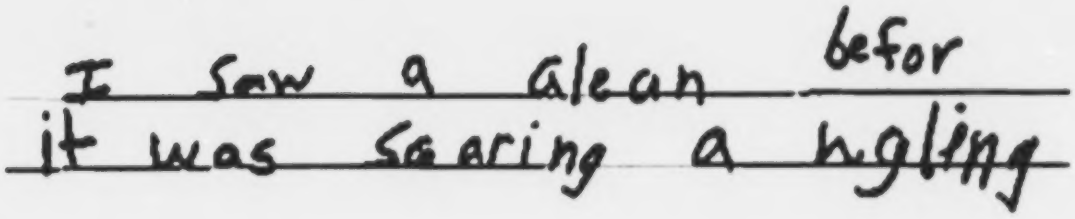
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1



Commentary for Score Point 1 Response

I saw an alien before.
It was scary and ugly.

This paper never states a complete thought, making it impossible to determine the writer's intention. There is no evidence of insightful or reflective thinking. The paper's brevity makes it impossible to determine what the writer's thoughts are. This student would benefit from frequent personal writing experiences that encourage fluency.

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Persuasive Writing

Persuasive writing requires students to choose positions, to make judgments, to offer proposals, and to argue convincingly for their beliefs and ideas. Using evidence such as examples or anecdotes to support their arguments, persuasive Writers establish themselves as informed, knowledgeable individuals. They orient readers by describing the subject, giving background information to focus the writing. More than any other kind of writing, persuasive writing requires writers to consider their audience.

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Rhetorical Effectiveness Scoring Guide

for

Persuasive Writing

"This is what I believe, and why I think you should believe it . . ."

Persuasive writing requires students to take positions, to make judgments, to offer proposals, and to argue convincingly for their opinions and ideas. Effective writers use evidence such as examples or anecdotes to support their arguments. Convincing arguments may appeal to logic or emotions.
Persuasive writers establish themselves as informed, knowledgeable individuals. They orient readers by describing the subject and giving background information to focus the writing. More than any other kind of writing, argument requires writers to consider their audience. Writers continue to be aware of readers throughout the piece, perhaps referring to them directly, acknowledging their objections and reservations, or trying to enlist their support. Good persuasive writing is coherent and clearly organized. Some students may choose to explore both sides of an issue and then offer a compromise, a third position, or some other satisfactorily persuasive closure.

At the fourth grade level, persuasive writing is a precursor to the more specific writing types assessed by CLAS in grades eight and ten: Problem/Solution, Evaluation, Controversial Issue, Speculation about Causes or Effects, and to some extent Interpretation.

Evident in all effective writing are qualities that underlie the specific rhetorical characteristics assessed by CLAS through the four broad categories of writing — expressive, narrative, persuasive, and informative. In general, good writing:

- Exhibits clear thinking
- Is coherent and cohesive
- Uses sensory and concrete details
- Uses appropriate examples and other kinds of elaboration
- Reflects an authentic voice
- Uses vocabulary appropriate to purpose and audience
- Uses well-formed and varied sentences

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Score Point 6

Focus/Coherence

Position — Writers usually assert and maintain a clear position throughout the piece; they present evidence and explanations in a purposeful way.

Organization — Writers establish a context for the presentation of their ideas. Writers arrange details, reasons, examples, and/or anecdotes in an effective and/or persuasive way. They often arrange their ideas in patterns that are surprising or unusual.

Coherence — Papers are unified. Writers provide clear and smooth links or transitions between sections of a paper, enabling readers to keep track of the relationship between parts.

Elaboration

Depth/Density of Arguments — Writers thoroughly develop and elaborate one or more of their reasons, examples, anecdotes and/or pieces of information. They may use a variety of strategies to elaborate.

Relevance of Arguments — Writers choose and present appropriate reasons, examples, information, and/or anecdotes to support their argument(s). They show that their ideas are valid based on prior knowledge, personal experience, and/or reflection.

Audience Awareness — Writers choose and present arguments with a clear awareness of reader needs. They often show credibility and a sense of authority by revealing their source(s) of information. The writer may anticipate and address reader misconceptions or counterarguments.

Voice/Style

Word Choice — Writers use lively and precise language showing careful attention to persuasive appeal. Words are appropriate to both the writer's purpose and a specific audience.

Voice — Writers exhibit a commitment to sharing their knowledge and point of view. They show confidence, conviction, and enthusiasm. These exceptional papers show a flair resulting from interesting ideas expressed in an original way.

Sentence Variety — Papers display appropriate and varied sentence structure which makes the writing interesting and convincing.

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Score Point 5

Focus/Coherence

Position — Writers state a clear position. Evidence and explanations may not appear as purposeful as in a score point 6 paper.

Organization — Writers establish a context. They arrange details, reasons, examples, and/or anecdotes in an effective way. There may be minor lapses in unity.

Coherence — Writers connect the parts of their papers, but transitions may not always be smooth.

Elaboration

Depth/Density of Argument(s) — Reasons, evidence, examples, information, and anecdotes are developed but the writer may use fewer strategies or may not elaborate as fully as does the writer of a score point 6 paper.

Relevance of Argument(s) — Writers choose and present appropriate reasons, examples, information, and other evidence to support their argument(s). They may have minor difficulty in establishing the validity of their position.

Audience Awareness — Writers meet the needs and expectations of readers for information about the topic. They show credibility by revealing some sources of information.

Voice/Style

Word Choice — Words are generally lively and precise but show somewhat less attention to exact meaning and persuasive appeal. Word choice is appropriate to the writer's purpose.

Voice — Writers write with authority and demonstrate involvement in the subject. Their writing may display minor stylistic affectations such as overly inflated or flowery language.

Sentence Variety — Writers use a variety of sentence types, but their writing may display occasional repetitive structures or other minor lapses in control.

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Score Point 4

Focus/Coherence

Position — Papers take a position(s) but may waver or include digressions.

Organization — Writers show some organizational patterns. The patterns may tend to be simple or incomplete. List-like papers will show some elaboration. Endings may seem tacked on.

Coherence — Papers are understandable; arguments, reasons, ideas, and/or anecdotes are usually clear, but the writing may contain some awkwardness, confusion, and/or lack of clarity.

Elaboration

Depth/Density of Argument(s) — Reasons, examples, information, and anecdotes are appropriate. Some areas may need elaboration.

Relevance of Argument(s) — Reasons, examples, information, and other evidence are usually relevant to the writer's purpose. Sources of information may not be mentioned. Sometimes opinions appear as facts.

Audience Awareness — Writers seem to assume that readers will find their ideas credible. Evidence of reader awareness may be scant or superficial.

Voice/Style

Word Choice — Language lacks the vigor and exactness of higher score point papers. Word choice is generally appropriate.

Voice — These writers convey a sense of conviction, but may not express themselves in a lively or particularly engaging voice. They may demonstrate less involvement in a subject than in higher score-point papers

Sentence — Writers generally rely on a small range of sentence lengths and types.

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Score Point 3

Focus/Coherence

Position — Writers may be irresolute in identifying a position. Longer papers may meander and contain digressions.

Organization — These papers may show some discernible pattern and/or plan. Arguments or ideas will be loose, unsystematic, or undeveloped; may rely on lists.

Coherence — Writers offer arguments that are usually related, but may contain some areas of vagueness or confusion.

Elaboration

Depth/Density of Argument(s) — Writers present some information, but papers may contain major areas in need of elaboration. The information is not always clear and/or the evidence is not always adequate.

Relevance of Argument(s) — Papers may contain some irrelevant and inappropriate details, examples, and/or arguments.

Audience Awareness — Papers usually do not reflect an awareness of the reader.

Voice/Style

Word Choice — Papers contain predictable vocabulary choices; some inappropriate word choices may be present.

Voice — The tone of these papers may be mechanical, overly authoritarian, hostile, or pleading. Some, however, will be engaging.

Sentence Variety — Papers frequently repeat the same simple sentence type.

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Score Point 2

Focus/Coherence

Position — Writers usually compose papers that are so brief that a direction is difficult to discern. Some papers do take a position, but it is not elaborated. Longer papers are usually rambling and unfocused.

Organization — Papers usually show little logical arrangement of ideas and may display a "jumping around" quality. Other papers may be so brief that organization is difficult to discern.

Coherence — Papers may contain disconnected ideas, arguments, and/or evidence. May contain many areas of vagueness and/or confusion.

Elaboration

Depth/Density of Argument(s) — The topic is sparsely developed; supportive ideas are thin.

Relevance of Argument(s) — Papers contain few if any relevant arguments.

Audience Awareness — Writers often assume that the reader already knows what they think.

Voice/Style

Word Choice — These papers often contain clichés or predictable vocabulary. May be inappropriate or inexact.

Voice — Papers are mechanical or inappropriate in tone.

Sentence Variety — Writers usually compose in short, simple sentences, long rambling sentences, or in phrase-like groups of words.

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Score Point 1

Focus/Coherence

Position — The paper shows a vague or no discernible position.

Organization — There appears to be little or no pattern.

Coherence — Papers are usually incoherent.

Elaboration

Depth/Density of Argument(s) — Few or no arguments are presented.

Relevance of Argument(s) — Arguments, if any, are almost totally irrelevant.

Audience Awareness — No evidence of reader awareness.

Voice/Style

Word Choice — Word choices are almost always simple, vague, and imprecise.

Voice — No evidence of engagement in the argument.

Sentence Variety — May show such a complete lack of sentence control that sentence variety cannot be determined.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6

Mr. X (Principle) Hawthorne School,

My name is [redacted] and I am 10 years old. A rule I would like changed is the no hats rule. On some days when it is really hot and sunny, kids who have fair skin (like me) can get burned on their face. Also during the winter when it gets really cold, kids need hats to keep their ears warm.

You might have made this rule up because kids might wear hats that have gang symbols on them and that I understand. Or you might have made that rule because you don't want kids to wear hats that have bad messages on them and that. I can also understand because you wouldn't want that at Hawthorne. So I have a soulution for you. What you could do is you could change the rule and say: we can wear hats like baseball hats or hats

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 6 (continued)

that go with outfits. Then you could say we can't wear hats that do have gang symbols or bad messages on them.

Please consider this new change. I hope you will decide we can wear hats because I love to wear hats and I'm sure so do a lot of other kids. Hats are also fun to wear. A lot of friends in my class say they want this rule changed also.

The thing I don't understand is why [illegible] kids are allowed to wear hats and we aren't. In a way it just doesn't feel fair. I think all four schools should have at least some of the same rules.

Sincerly,

(4th grade student)

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Commentary for Score Point 6 Response

This paper represents an exceptional performance for a fourth grade student writing for the purpose of persuading another to her position. In the first few opening sentences of her letter, this writer addresses her audience, introduces herself, identifies a rule she wants changed, and launches into reasonable arguments for its change.

The writer never wavers from her purpose of persuading Mr. X, the principal, to allow students to wear hats to school. In a sophisticated manner she at first expresses her understanding for the rule (gang symbols, bad messages). The writer offers her solution of permitting children to wear "baseball hats or hats that go with outfits." Her arguments appeal to reason (fair skin, cold ears), emotion ("...I love to wear hats"), and logic ("I think all four schools should have at least some of the same rules.)".

While the writer continues to develop her arguments, she demonstrates her awareness of the need to address the concerns of her audience. Her tone is respectful, yet she establishes herself as an authority through personal experience and as spokesperson for others.

Overall, this paper is a clear example of an exceptional performance in persuasive writing. It has focus and coherence; it elaborates on effective arguments, keeping the audience in mind, and demonstrates control of word choice and sentence variety. Above all, it conveys a tone appropriate to the subject, expressing confidence and conviction.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5

Dear Student Council,

There are many ways how kids at John J Montgomery Elementary want their lunch organized, easier and more funnier. To begin with, kids would want a better lunch that they would like for exsample; pizza, baked paatoe and other stuff kids like to eat. Next, lunch should be 45 minutes to an hour to get more energy and rest, also to have fun. Also, kids are maybe getting sick of milk so we should pick milk or juice or get both. last, you can get the lunch already for us to get so we won't forget anything or so we can get all of

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 (continued)

the four food groups.
Are you giving us enough space or giving us what we want? To begin with, you should make tables bigger and getting the money for it by having more funraisers. Next, You could make two sections of food for us to get and the leftovers give it to the fifth and sixth graders or/and if there still leftovers give to the teachers or yarduties for working so hard or even the homeless who are starved and have no food. even though you go through all that trouble it's worth it. Also, after lunch when

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 5 (continued)

we go out to play we can have more playground supplies to have more energy and would be more funner, we could make the manney by doing plays or even fundraisers. It would still be having fun. last, we can clean our tables who want to and make costumes for them. It would be really fun exciting and wonderful if all of them come true!!! Please make them come true and let it be fun for us!!!

Sincerly,

Thank You!!!

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Commentary for Score Point 5 Response

In this commendable paper, the writer offers several strong arguments for lunch time improvement. The writer begins by stating that "there are many ways how kids at John J. Montgomery Elementary want their lunch organized," and presents these "many ways" in a fairly well-developed fashion. Arguments are generally linked with appropriate transition words. Some arguments are repeated ("more energy," "more fun") and are less developed than in a score point 6 paper.

The writer's ideas are relevant and elaborated upon with personal anecdotes. Some arguments could have been explored in more depth (especially arguments near the conclusion of the paper, "cleaning tables"and "making costumes"). The writer clearly shows an awareness of audience.

On the whole, this paper uses language well. The paper takes a helpful, reasoned tone and the overall effect is one of moderate persuasion. While this paper could have been strengthened with a stronger conclusion, it shows commendable achievement for a fourth grade writer of a persuasive essay.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4

Dear students of the council

I have some great ideas to improve lunch time. One we could make lunch time longer and all we would have to do was get out a little latter. (or)

Mayle we could have a funraiser and with the money we could buy a boombox and have a little music during lunch time.

We can also make the lunch room larger so it wont be as crowed as usual.

Then when one grade is in class one is eating lunch.

And about the boom box we could have a little

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 4 (continued)

place in the middle were you could dance, or a Sunday bar and the kids could make there own desert, and we could have fudge and cramle, varties of ice cream.

If you like any of these ideas please wright back.

Sincerley Yours,

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Commentary for Score Point 4 Response

This student begins by taking a clear position offering "some great ideas to improve lunch time," and remains coherent and focused on the topic throughout. The absence of elaboration, however, along with a loose, somewhat rambling organization, keep this paper firmly in the score point 4 range. The paragraph beginning "And about the boom box" shows the beginnings of elaboration, but the overall effect of the paper is one of a spontaneous, unplanned list of unelaborated suggestions.

Persuasuve writing requires an attempt to convince the reader or "audience." An effective persuasive paper will anticipate the reader's response and make claims for its suggestions. While the overall tone of this paper is one of some personal conviction, it makes no attempt to persuade the reader. The writer, in the last sentence, does open the door to further communication ("If you like any of these ideas please wright back") but does not attempt to convince the reader of their significance and value. Including counter arguments or acknowledging possible difficulties in implementing the ideas for improving the school's lunch period would have strengthened this paper.

This score point 4 paper shows a student ready to move into elaboration. With further instruction in writing persuasive papers, including the opportunity to share such papers with other students, this student will be able to write more effective persuasive papers.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 3

Dear student I think to make your lunch time more fun and organizid like 10 min. before lunch time you go on the playground and choose who you want to sit by and if you have some extra time go to the bathroom and get a trink and when they blow the wisel line up the order of who you sat by.

Another Idea I have is to let the kid at the school vote one special day on what where having for lunch.

Anoth Idea to make it more organize is to let the kids that make a mess clean up the mess the made.

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Commentary for Score Point 3 Response

Although this paper offers some relevant ideas, it does not make any attempt to convince the reader that these ideas are worth taking seriously. The opening sentence begins reasonably but quickly becomes a rambling sequence of events that could take place in the "10 min. before lunch time." The rest of the paper simply presents two additional ideas without any elaboration or persuasion.

The writer addresses the audience, but only minimally. In the last two paragraphs, the ideas are simply jotted down, not directed toward a reader.

Vocabulary choice is simple and predictable. While the paper shows an awareness of the task, the details and support needed to convey the advice convincingly are lacking. Instruction and modeling of how effective elaboration and directed arguments can succeed in persuading readers to the author's point of view will help this writer learn how to write more persuasively.

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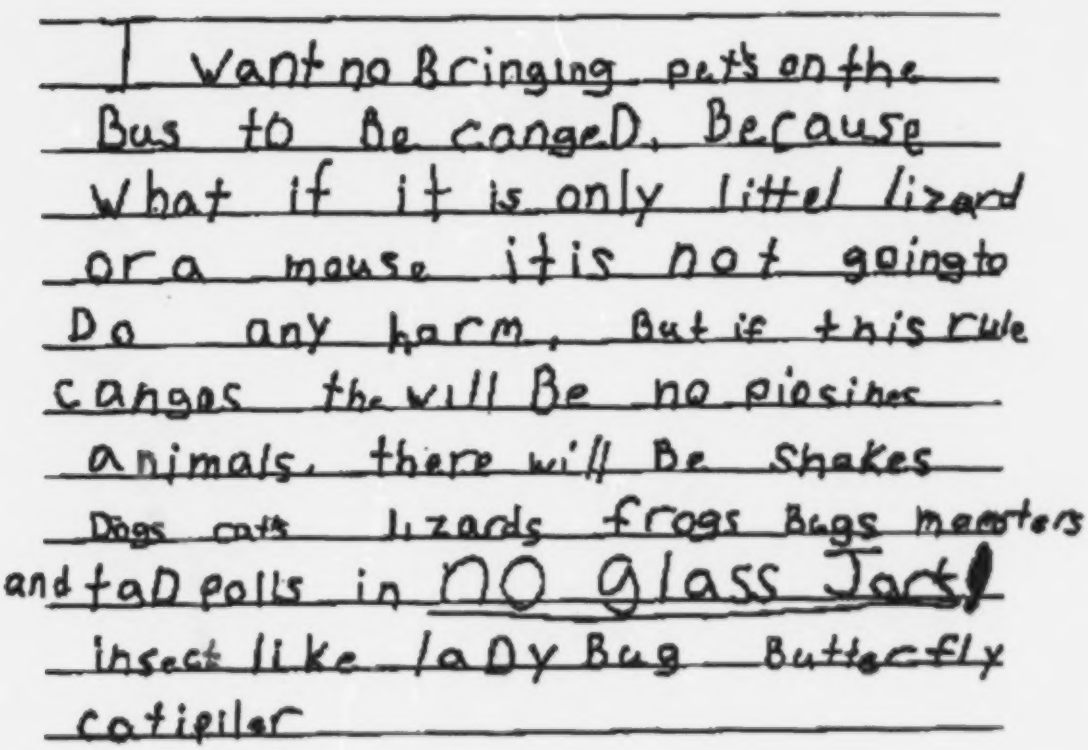
Student Response Illustrating Score Point 2


I want no Bringing pets on the Bus to Be canged. Because what if it is only littel lizard or a mouse it is not going to Do any harm. But if this rule canges the will Be no piosines animals. there will Be Shakes Dogs cats lizards frogs Bugs meeters and taD polls in NO glass Jars! insect like laDy Bug Butterfly catipiler

Commentary for Score Point 2 Response

This writer begins by identifying a rule he or she wants changed ("no bringing pets on the bus"). One reason to bring pets on the bus is given. An attempt to identify and solve possible problems with the rule change is confusing ("no 'piosines' animals," "there will be snakes…") and unclear; "no glass jars" is linked in the same sentence with dogs and cats. The writer ends with an incomplete sentence on insects. There is no direct reference to the audience.

Use of inventive spelling adds breadth to the paper ("piosines"/poisonous, "catipiler"/caterpillar), but the ideas are presented in a disconnected fashion. This writer clearly has a strong opinion to share but needs to learn how to organize and develop ideas to convey that position effectively.

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Student Response Illustrating Score Point 1

Dear Adults

I think that you should be nice to Childrens.

Yours Truly

Commentary for Score Point 1 Response

This letter addresses adults and gives one piece of general advice. No elaboration in the form of examples or reasons is given. Word choice is general in this one-sentence piece. The letter follows correct form, and conventions appear to be adequate. The reader gets the impression that the writer is capable of handling mechanics; in this instance, however, there is no indication of fluency, development of ideas, or voice.

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IV. Sample Elementary Prompt

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Directions for Section One, Reading

This is a reading assessment. In this section you will read an article, story, or poem. Some of you may read two selections. Next to the reading selection is a wide margin with the heading "My thoughts, feelings, and/or questions about what I'm reading." You may use this space to make any notes as you read. You also may mark up the reading selection in any way that helps you to better understand or remember what you are reading. When you are finished reading, answer all the questions about the reading selection in the best way you can.

Find the words GO ON at the bottom of the next page. The words GO ON mean to turn the page and continue working. Keep working until you see the words STOP! DO NOT TURN THE PAGE! This is the end of Section One.

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Section One
Reading

Getting Ready to Read

Today you will read the true story of "An Amazing Discovery" from the book *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects* by Jenny Woods.

Time to Read

An Amazing Discovery
by Jenny Wood

My thoughts
and/or questions about
what I'm reading

It was a warm Sunday afternoon in September, 1940. Four friends, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, were exploring the woods on a hill overlooking the town of Montignac in southwest France.

Suddenly Marcel shouted to his friends.

"Come and look at this!"

Hearing the note of excitement in his voice, the three other boys ran to see what he had found. There between the roots of a dead tree was a dark, deep hole.

Jacques peered down into the darkness. "It looks as if it goes right down into the bowels of the earth."

The strange hole did seem to have no end. It was as if, down under the dead tree, there was a hollow bubble of dark nothingness.

"Perhaps it's the secret underground passage which leads to Lascaux Manor," said Georges.

GO ON

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My thoughts
and/or questions about
what I'm reading

You know, the one Monsieur Laval was telling us about at school."

That would be a find!" said Simon. For years people had talked about this secret passage, but no one had ever found it.

Come on then," urged Marcel. "What are we waiting for? Let's explore."

No," said Simon, "not now. It'll be dark soon and there'll be trouble if we're not home for dinner. Let's do this properly. We should take a whole afternoon and we'll need a light and some ropes."

You're right," said Jacques. "Why don't we come back on Thursday? We're off school that afternoon."

OK then," agreed Marcel, although he didn't know how he would be able to wait four whole days.

But Thursday came soon enough. The boys met by the dead tree with a homemade oil lamp, a few bits of rope and a knife. They set to work clearing away the undergrowth from around the hole.

"How deep do you think it is?" asked Georges, peering down into the blackness.

"No idea," replied Simon. "Why don't we try throwing a few stones into it. We might be able to guess the depth by listening to the stones falling."

The stones fell and rolled for a long time.

"It must be very deep," said Simon. "Perhaps we shouldn't go down."

GO ON

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My thoughts
and/or questions about
what I'm reading

"We'll just have to be careful," said Jacques. "Now come on, let's stop wasting time!"

One by one the boys squeezed through. They slid and tumbled down and down. At last they stopped, none the worse for the fall, at the bottom of the hole. Even the oil lamp had survived its journey.

In the lamp's dim light, the boys could see that they were in a huge underground chamber. The walls seemed to be covered with lines and dots.

"Turn up the lamp and hold it higher," said Georges. "I want to get a better look at these walls." His voice echoed through the cave.

Jacques did as he was asked. As the lamp began to light up the cave, the lines and spots seemed to grow into the shapes of bulls and deer. The walls were covered with paintings!

"These paintings must have been made by cavemen thousands of years ago."

"And no one has seen them for thousands of years!" added Simon.

It had taken them quite some time to get into the cave and already the light from the entrance was growing dim.

"We should really tell someone about this," said Simon.

"Not yet," Marcel replied decidedly. "I want to see it all before we let anyone else know. I think we should come back tomorrow and really explore."

GO ON

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My thoughts
and/or questions about
what I'm reading

So the next day, the boys returned to their secret place. This time they found a gallery leading off the main chamber and a shaft. The walls of both were covered with paintings.

Later that day, the boys decided to tell Monsieur Laval, their school teacher about their great find. He realized at once that, if the boys' story were true, they had stumbled upon what might be one of the most important sites of prehistoric paintings ever discovered. But he decided to go and look for himself, just to make sure before telling everyone else.

Six days later, after the boys had cleared and widened the hole still further, the schoolmaster entered the cave. As soon as he saw the paintings he knew that the boys had been right. This was an extraordinary find.

The news of Lascaux Cave spread fast. Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings. Today the ancient paintings have begun to suffer from exposure to the air, so the climate in the cave is carefully controlled. Scientists and historians are at work there, trying to find out more about the paintings and the people who painted them.

If you are ever lucky enough to be shown around Lascaux Cave, your guide could be none other than Jacques Marsal, one of the boys who first stumbled on the hole between the roots of a dead tree all those years ago!

Jenny Wood. "An Amazing Discovery," *Caves: Facts, Stories, Projects.* New York: Two-Can Publishing Ltd, 1990, pp. 4-10.

GO ON

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After You Have Read

1. What are your thoughts about this story?

GO ON

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2. Draw a picture about the "amazing discovery" described in this selection.

3. Explain your picture.

GO ON

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4. Think of some questions you would like to ask Marcel, Jacques, Georges, and Simon about their discovery. Write your questions on the lines below.

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

c. _____

_____

d. _____

_____

5. What did you learn from the experience of these explorers? Give examples.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

GO ON

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6. Look at the two pictures below. Circle the picture that you think would be better to use with the story you just read.

7. Tell why you think the picture you circled would be the better choice.

GO ON

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8. This is your chance to tell anything else you want about the story — what it means to you, what it reminds you of, how it relates to your own life, or whatever else you think is important.

STOP!
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE
This is the end of Section One.

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Directions for Section Two, Group Work

In this section you will be working in a group. Your group will be talking about topics related to what you read in Section One. Some of the activities in this section may direct you to work alone and then share with your group, and other activities may have all of you working together. The activities of your group will be different from neighboring groups. It is important to take notes of your discussion because you will be able to look at these notes when you write your essay in the next section of this assessment.

Read the directions in Section Two and do the activities described. Members of the group should take turns reading the directions. The group leader should keep the activities moving along so that you finish all activities.

Remember that the words GO ON at the bottom of the page mean to turn the page and continue working . Keep working until you see the words STOP! DO NOT TURN THE PAGE! This is the end of Section Two.

Do not go on to Section Three of the assessment.

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Section Two
Group Work

1. In Section One you read about four boys who made an "amazing discovery." Take turns sharing with your group what you remember most about this story.

2. In Section One the author wrote, "Soon historians and tourists were flocking to Montignac to see the paintings." With your group, list all the reasons why people would think this discovery was important.

GO ON

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3. Take turns in your group talking about several discoveries you or someone you know has made. It might be something very ordinary, such as exploring a drawer or closet to find out what is there or taking a toy apart to see how it works. You may want to take notes as members of your group share their discoveries.

GO ON

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4. Working together with your group, talk about other discoveries that you may have read or learned about. In the top part of each box below, draw or write about a discovery. In the bottom part of each box, write why that discovery was important.

Discoveries we know about

Discovery Why it was important	Discovery Why it was important
Discovery Why it was important	Discovery Why it was important

GO ON

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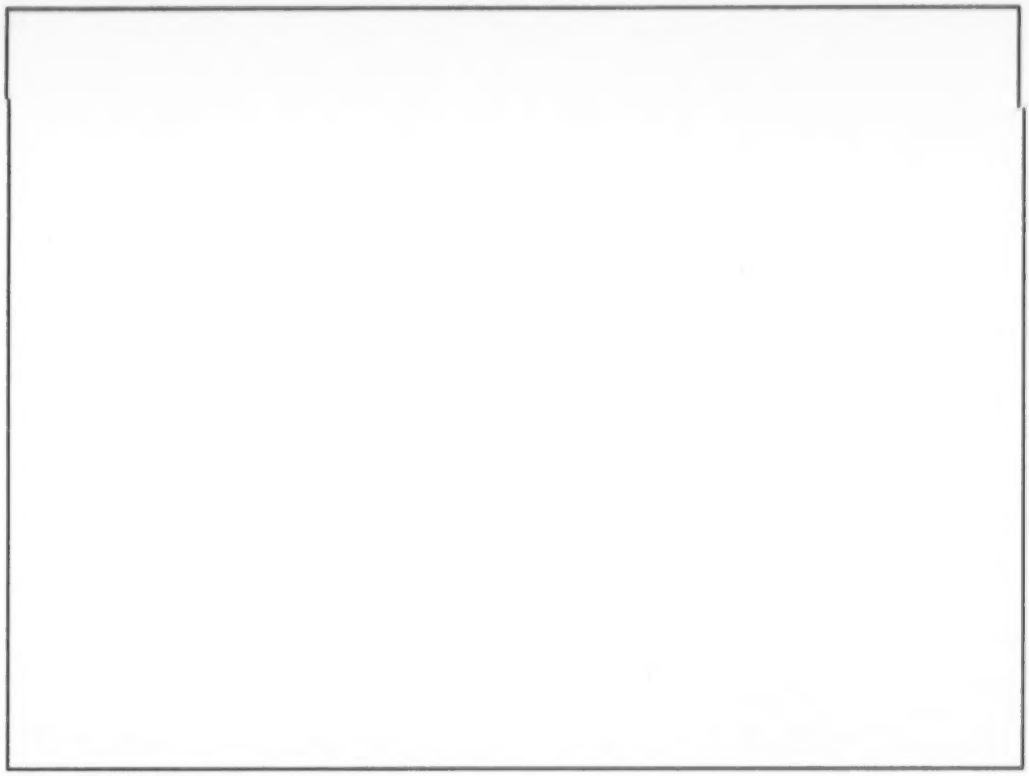
5. Now draw a picture showing one discovery you made.



6. Share your picture with your group. Tell why your discovery was important to you.

STOP!
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE!
This is the end of Section One.

GO ON

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Directions for Section Three, Writing

This is a test of your writing ability. You will be able to do a better job if you spend a few minutes planning. You may use the notes that you wrote when you worked with your group.

Each of you may have a different topic to write about, so your teacher will not be able to answer questions about your assignment. Read your topic carefully. Reread it, if necessary, so that you understand what you are being asked to do.

When you finish writing, read your work carefully and make any changes or additions that will improve it. Fix any mistakes you notice.

GO ON

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Section Three
Writing

Getting Ready to Write

Pretend your class is writing a book about discoveries. The completed book will be put in the school library for other students to check out and read. Think about something you have discovered or explored. You may use your notes and drawings from your group work to help you get started.

Time to Write

Write about one of your discoveries or explorations. Your classmates will want to know about what you discovered, how it felt to make the discovery, and what you learned from your experience.

GO ON

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